# PETER MACKENZIE
# AS I KNEW HIM

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*By Dinsdale T. Young* Author of "The Crimson Book" "Neglected People of the Bible" etc

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I GRATEFULLY INSCRIBE THIS APPRECIATION OF A NOBLE MAN TO A MULTITUDE OF SYMPATHETIC FRIENDS WHO IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE KINGDOM HAVE HEARD ME EULOGIZE HIM

# Prefatory Note

MUCH of this little book was spoken. The utterance took the form of a lecture which, with very considerable variations, was delivered something like three hundred times in town and country places of England, Scotland, and Wales.

So many have been the requests for the publication in book-form of my impressions of Peter Mackenzie, that I feared lest failure of compliance might be interpreted as failure of gratitude to my generous encouragers.

In the opening sentences of the introductory chapter I have indicated the limited scope of this tribute. For biographical information I would commend readers to the Lives of Peter Mackenzie which are in circulation.

My cordial thanks are due to relatives and intimate friends of Mr. Mackenzie who have kindly confirmed, corrected, or supplemented my notes on my beloved Friend. Such I may indeed characterize him; he was, if I may so say, an hereditary Friend, for he was closely connected with my grandfather, and was long and affectionately associated with my tenderly-prized parents.

He very characteristically informed my congregation on a, to me, memorable occasion, that he had known their minister since he was in petticoats, and one of his final words to me was the expression of his conviction that I would carry on his work. These remarks will show that I have had ample opportunity of knowing "the man and his communication."

I earnestly pray the Divine Smile upon this attempt, wrought amid heavy pressure of rival duties, to delineate one of whom the word of "the Lord of Hosts" is demonstrably true:

"My covenant was with him of life and peace;

and I gave them to him that he might fear, and he feared me, and stood in awe of my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and uprightness, and did turn many away from iniquity."

DINSDALE T. YOUNG.

1904.

# CONTENTS


| CHAPTER. | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| I | Introductory | 13 |
| II | Dawning | 24 |
| III | The Burning Spirit and the Veiled Face | 35 |
| IV | Towards God and Towards Man | 44 |
| V | "The Larger Heart, the Kindlier Hand." | 52 |
| VI | A Preacher of the Word Who Minded His Business | 65 |
| VII | A Ministerial Lecturer | 77 |
| VIII | Genius Consummate | 92 |
| IX | Perennial Wit and Humour | 103 |
| X | Toiling Toward the Greatness of His Rest | 116 |

# I

## INTRODUCTORY

THIS book is in no sense a rival to Lives of Peter Mackenzie which have appeared or may yet appear. It is rather supplemental to them or preparatory to them. This book is not a biography. It is an appreciation. As such alone is it justly to be judged.

Peter Mackenzie was a rare and opulent character. Only they really knew him who knew him personally. When Dr. Macfadyen, of Manchester, was being carried to his burial, Dr. Finlayson—a truly great preacher !—was one of the devout men who lamented him, and he remarked : " No one knew Macfadyen who did not know him as a friend." This is particularly true of Peter Mackenzie. The eager public who waited on his words did not know *the man*. Certainly the excited, laughing throng who gaped for his jokes and for them only did not understand him. His friends only could utter the " Sesame " to which the treasures of his great soul were opened.

I write of Peter Mackenzie because he was my father's loving friend and mine. From childhood I have known what manner of man this great Methodist preacher was. Mr. Mackenzie was a

regular guest in my father's house from my earliest recollections. He was with us in our family joys and sorrows. Multitudes of all churches who listened to him had little conception what a royal soul this Methodist was. Because I knew him so well and loved him, and love him, I now offer this appreciation of his character, and genius, and work.

The word "appreciation" has been used. I use it advisedly and, I think, not inappropriately. These pages are intended to constitute an appreciation in the full signification of that manifold word. We appreciate when we estimate. And I am lovingly bold to attempt to estimate this vanished evangelical Hercules. We appreciate when we reveal true worth. My warm desire is to set forth the sterling quality of my ascended and crowned friend. To reveal the "God's message" that was in him will be my cherished desire. If any success attend the endeavour, be it accounted, with all praise to the enabling Lord, a gift of grace.

Nor shall I perhaps greatly strain the meaning of a word if I appreciate in a third connotation of the term. We appreciate when we enhance the value of a man. Certain events or crises are said to appreciate money. Similarly certain considerations may appreciate a good man. They may increase his value among his fellows. I confess to an ambition, a sacred ambition, to ennoble the idea of Peter

Mackenzie which many possess. This strange, loving, rollicking man was one of John Wesley's noblest sons, but what is more important far, he was one of Christ's most winsome disciples. He was in his very soul a Jesus-like man. If I can heighten any man's idea of this true and beloved follower of the Saviour, I shall think myself happy as one who has attained "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

It savours of familiarity to speak of him without prefix as Peter Mackenzie. But there are at least two kinds of familiarity: there is the familiarity which springs from contempt or its equivalents, and there is the familiarity which is the outflow of deep founts of love. When people speak of him, as many are accustomed to do, unadornedly as "Peter Mackenzie," theirs is the familiarity of an unquenchable affection. Nay, love waxed yet more familiar, for this wonderful man was commonly called by no other name than "Peter." All knew him as "Peter" and talked of him as "Peter." Dear old Peter! His name sings in ten thousand Methodist hearts and homes as though no victor years had sundered us from his burly bodily presence. To untold multitudes Peter's strong, humorous, tender face smiles in amid the shadows —a light at eventide. Such familiar address is therefore expressive of the highest fame. It is so in every sphere of life. Mr. Barrie remarks that we

do not speak of "Mr. Cromwell." No! "Beauty unadorned is adorned the most." In the Methodist Church men are canonized when all prefixes are discarded. "The Rev." and "Mr." are prerogatives of the unloved or the obscure. Love is very familiar, and its familiarity does not arise from contempt, nor does it breed contempt; it therefore is never contemptible.

No one denomination could monopolize Peter Mackenzie. Though he was a Methodist in his heart's core and was racy of the Methodist soil, and indeed could perhaps scarcely have been a product of any other church, yet he was utterly remote from all narrowness of spirit. Bigotry in all its diabolic shapes and forms his soul loathed. Peter Mackenzie loved all who loved Christ. He called all Christians "fellow-disciples." He was "a lover of good men." How he prized and honoured the great teachers of all the churches. He revelled in Mr. Spurgeon, Dr. Parker, and Dr. Maclaren, and knew their books as they are all-too-seldom known. Nor was he by any means slow to appreciate the great preachers and writers and saints of the Anglican Church. He could tell surprisingly much of Trench and Liddon and Stanley and other chieftains of that venerated Church. It is a very notable fact that all over England great numbers of the Established Church flocked to hear Peter Mackenzie. Not unfrequently they deprecated his mannerisms

and certain of his utterances, but for all that they greatly valued his breezy and deeply spiritual discourses. Be it said also that a striking feature of his assemblies was the presence of clergy of the Established Church. Mr. Mackenzie's friends often noted this. Just as Mr. Spurgeon had no warmer admirer than Father Stanton, so Anglican clergy of varied orders found stimulus in the fervent, dramatic evangelism of Peter Mackenzie.

And he was shown great honour by all the Free Churches. Mr. Spurgeon, to my certain knowledge, invited him to speak in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Dr. Parker invited him to lecture in the City Temple, and he did so. Dr. Maclaren attended one of his lectures. Probably few ministers were so well known to all the churches as was this rugged orator. He was accustomed to preach, lecture, and speak for all denominations. His congregations in every part of Britain were inter-denominational. Nor was this through the religious press. Certainly it never " boomed " him. He was one of the few who are independent of the press. His fame was won by sheer genius and hard toil. His force alone forged his name.

I increasingly regard Peter Mackenzie as, for reasons to be dilated on presently, one of the most remarkable figures that has appeared on the perspective of English Nonconformity. Assuredly he was one of Methodism's most astonishing creations.

He was of the mental and spiritual lineage of the early Methodist preachers. He must be classed with Samuel Bradburn, and John Nelson, and David Stoner, and William Dawson, and "Sammy" Hick. It may indeed be questioned whether he was not, for pure genius, greater than any of these. When a few more years have ebbed the wonderfulness of Peter Mackenzie will be yet more clearly seen. He was one of God's most unique gifts to the Church. His public record is familiar to all Methodists. But he was even greater off the rostrum than on it. His personality was altogether interesting and altogether charming. He merits greener laurels than we can gather. We glorify God in him. There is scarcely need to pourtray the strong vivacious mien of Peter Mackenzie. He "dwelt in the presence of his brethren." His portrait is probably to be found in more Methodist homes, especially in the north of England, than that of any other preacher of earlier or of later days. But his portrait is graven deep on a multitude of grateful hearts. His reputation does not depend on pictorial or literary reminders. "I have you in my heart" is the warm apostrophe of many to this dear man who is no longer visible to eyes of flesh, but is so visibly discernible to the eyes of the heart. How many of us there are who have his effigy continually upon the near horizon of our mind!

Peter Mackenzie, even as to his physical personality, is supremely difficult to describe to those

who never saw the man. To see him once was to see him always. Nature had stamped him with a unique stamp. His build and bearing gave assurance of an unwonted type of manhood. Above medium height. Everything about him was big—and herein his physical make-up parabolized his intellectual and spiritual nature. A massive and yet singularly supple frame : so that his dramatic movements, even when past threescore years and ten, were a wonder to every one. A great dome-like head—his head upon him was like Carmel. A broad and beetling brow. Piercing eyes, full of kindly scrutiny, and twinkling continually with merriment. A countenance "excellent as the cedars," constantly beaming with kindliness ; but of such variations was that countenance capable ! Few orators could speak with facial expressions as Peter Mackenzie could. His power of grimace was simply extraordinary. He could *look* more than most men could say. The variations of that face were indescribable. The "shew of" his "countenance" had to be seen to be appreciated. And that oratoric mouth ! Sometimes such compression in those tight-locked lips ! Then such relaxing lines of humour or of pathos. Then such emissions of rushing torrents of eloquence, absolutely natural because absolutely inspired. Peter Mackenzie was all life. Every atom of his body throbbed with life. When he stood before an audience he quivered with

vitality. His whole being talked. He spoke with his eyes, his face, his fingers, his feet, he was embodied speech. Those who heard and saw and knew him best will be least disposed to charge me with exaggeration as I thus dimly describe the "manner" of this quite unique Methodist orator.

What strange, strong personal affection he evoked! The blessing of Judah was surely his. "Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise." Even they who were unresponsive to his public ministry greatly honoured the man. There was nothing sordid in that noble nature. He was indeed what his epitaph in Dewsbury Cemetery designates him, "The Greatheart of Methodism." As we will presently show, Mr. Mackenzie was utterly and unchangeably generous—generous alike in speech and in act. When did he run his brethren down? Who ever saw him possessed by the devil of depreciation? What harm he might have done if, guested as he was in hundreds of homes, he had weakened his brethren's hands for the work! Had he talked against his Church what disloyalty he might have created! But he was too great and good for such meanness. No reputations suffered at his hands. He was the soul of honour, of brotherly kindness, of Christian chivalry. No marvel then that like Asher he was "acceptable to his brethren." And so early and successfully did he fulfil his course that, like Asher, he seemed to "dip his foot in oil." He

was abundantly "blessed" with spiritual "children." And the promise to Asher was his experience in royal degree: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy day (and it was a strenuous day!) so shall thy strength be."

The scope and limits of this book are suggested by the title. It is *Peter Mackenzie as I knew him* who is here pourtrayed. All I narrate is such as I had personal cognizance of. His sayings here recorded are those I heard from him either publicly or privately. What is omitted is omitted by the law of the title of the book. So in regard of his characteristics. I seek to interpret him as I knew him or thought I knew him. If I give a quite inadequate delineation, let it be ascribed to "limited experience." But as my eyes saw him I represent him. And each man is only responsible for his own vision. So also in respect of his doings. Mackenzie-anecdotage is endless. What is reported here is what the writer can personally certify or what he knows to be authentic. It is hoped that the book will be read from that standpoint.

Seldom can any saint have more ceaselessly yearned to glorify the Divine Saviour than Peter Mackenzie did. His dominant motive and end was to make known the savour of Emanuel's name. In the central depths of his spacious soul that glowing and refining passion burned. Nothing charmed his spiritually-minded friends more than this feature

of his delightsome character. If he could by sermon or lecture or address make men think more highly of Jesus Christ he was abundantly and joyfully content. Coming out of a chapel where he had been preaching on "The unsearchable riches of Christ," a friend remarked to him how profitable the sermon had been, and he replied, "Bless the Lord that the people cannot say it was a Christless sermon." Christless sermons he abhorred with whole-souled abhorrence. He never preached them. He could not bear to hear them. He was of Dr. Parker's opinion that there is a way to the Cross from every text of Scripture. And he loved to discover that way. A venerable and much-tried saint after having heard Peter Mackenzie preach, said, "He brought us all to the Cross and left us there." That also happily indicates the effect of his preaching upon multitudes. Certainly it points to the chief motive of all our friend's pulpit ministrations.

This evangelical spirit manifested itself spontaneously in all his private life and conversation. He was Christo-centric in the noblest signification of that sadly-abused expression. He had a Paul-like impatience to turn from other topics to Christ and Him crucified. He had a Rutherford-like delight in telling of the praises of the Beloved. He had a Spurgeon-like naturalness and ease in leading from all conversational subjects to "the Name which is above every Name." You might discuss politics,

but he managed to divert you to the Son of God erewhile. You might criticize a faulty or inconsistent Christian, but he soon drew you to magnify Him in whom there is no flaw. He delighted in public and private to speak of the Saviour as "The Master." And assuredly He was "The Master" to Peter Mackenzie. All his lessons were learned at Jesu's feet. His law was the words of Jesus. He used to speak of his death as "When the Master calls me." To magnify "The Master" and to make Him honourable, this was the passion, kept ever fresh, of his devoted days. For this he laboured much in prayer, for well he knew that the Holy Spirit alone can glorify Christ, and that He is only to be won by constant prayer. The wonderful "unction" of Mackenzie's words had its open secret in his constancy and prevalency of prayer.

"Methinks my friend is richly shrined;" and could he now address us he would say, "Write only of me what will honour the Master." Be this our happy lot! May that sacred end be in some degree realized by means of this tribute to one of God's good and faithful servants, who has surely been "applauded and rewarded" and been thrilled into everlasting bliss by the Lord's "Well done!" May the Master be magnified in the delineation of the servant.

## II

## DAWNING

PETER MACKENZIE was a Scotsman by birth. He was born in a romantic spot. Glenshee, in Perthshire, is wild glen, many miles in length, and studded with grandeur and loveliness. Much of the attributes of his birthplace lingered about his personality, albeit he left his native glen in his youth. Mackenzie was an embodied Glenshee. He was a great wild individuality, adorned with many a beauty and rich with much fruitfulness. A true child of nature was he—and nature had been generous to her child.

It is interesting to recall that Glenshee is not many miles from Kirriemuir. And who does not know Kirriemuir? at least, under its literary name of Thrums. In his earliest years Peter Mackenzie must have visited Thrums. I wonder if he ever saw the " Window " ? Possibly the window was not in existence then, and yet I think it must have been. Certainly the person who was presently to see so much and be seen so well through that window would then be living, a bright young woman, in Thrums. I wonder, again, if Peter ever saw Margaret (she would be about his own age) when he walked abroad in Thrums. Perchance he did, but little he would imagine that one of the loveliest characters of modern Scottish literature was developing in the little weaving town of Kirriemuir. I cannot

resist the fancy too that the stalwart laddie Peter, may, all unbeknowingly, have seen a little "laddie," Alexander Whyte by name, playing in those lowly streets. One of the most memorable orators to-be of these later years may then have seen, without knowing who he saw, one of the noblest geniuses to-be of the gifted pulpit of Scotland.

Be that as it may, it is no slight additional association with the traditions of Thrums that the original genius of modern Methodism was born not many miles away, and must occasionally have visited its now famous scenes.

Peter Mackenzie was anything but a typical Scotsman. It was hardly to be expected that he would illustrate the national type when he left his native country at so early a period of life. Still, when one looks closely, there are Scottish characteristics in that unconventional man, that unconventional minister. He was distinctly reflective. Few men were so given to silent sessions of thought as was he. To only see him on the lecture platform in his more dramatic and extravagant moods one might easily be pardoned for deeming him anything but meditative. Yet such he was in unusual degree. In quiet hours in his dearly-loved study; in long railway journeys; in the prophets' chamber of the countless houses where he stayed in his pilgrimages; here, there, and everywhere he pondered, pondered, pondered. Mackenzie's was a

vastly more ruminative mind than most imagined. Indeed, this perhaps in his own home became a temptation at times to this lover of quiet. And he would, occasionally at least, withdraw himself too much from his family to the seclusion of his study. A more affectionate husband and father could hardly be, and yet the claims of meditation were allowed an easy victory over the claims of household companionship. His preparation for public service was almost entirely meditative rather than literary. He brooded his sermons and lectures into cosmic form and beauty. And most will grant that his insatiable reflectiveness is a characteristic of his Scottish birth.

Whilst none could on occasion be more naïve and frank, none could on occasion be more reticent. His exuberant eloquence was balanced by an equally exuberant taciturnity. Few could be more uncommunicative than he. He froze all inquisitive groups by his icy silence. He could not be "pumped." He could be the most discouraging of men to people who desired, as the Scotch folk have it, to "speir" him. Peter's silences were very instructive studies. His repressive reticence had a healthy effect upon Mr. Talkative, though the latter did not always appreciate the flavour of the medicine. He gave full proof of his Scottish birth in his eloquent silence.

Peter Mackenzie had a very logical mind. Superficial observers may have failed to note this, but if

so they must have been extremely superficial. His best sermons had much really admirable argument in them. I have heard him deliver an address on Foreign Missions which was as logical a plea for that divinest of enterprises as any one need desire to hear. His principal lectures not seldom abounded in keen and close-compacted argument illustrated by all manner of quaint and even comical but yet pertinent illustration. As a matter of fact some of his ablest lectures were his least popular ones. The late Mr. H. B. Harrison, of Manchester, no mean authority on such subjects, told me that Peter Mackenzie's lecture on "Christianity and Her Rivals," which was really an apologia for Christianity as against Positivism, so abounded in solid argument that in his opinion it was far and away the ablest deliverance he had heard from Mr. Mackenzie. His lecture on Job—one of his finest efforts—was replete with expository and historical argument. His oration on "Satan: His Personality, Character and Power," was in genuine argument worthy of a theological professor. A similar remark applies to his lectures on "Ritualism," "Providence," and many varied Scripture characters.

He was no mere buffoon, as some who did not know him imagined. At his intellectual best he amply demonstrated by his linked reasonings that his reputation rested on a solid basis. How much

of that rugged granitic logicality of his is reminiscent of the country of his birth!

I see the Scotsman also, to name but another of his characteristics, in his love of simplicity in his home life. As I shall have occasion to show presently, he was a man of memorable generosity. But he could not abide extravagance in the use and wont of domestic life. Hospitable in high degree, he yet was almost Spartan in his severe simplicity in the ordinary conduct of his home. He would spend as little as possible and have as little spent in household matters. Luxury was peculiarly distasteful to him. He believed, occasionally to excess, in domestic economy. It might be better if a dash of Peter's Scottish caution and carefulness marked more household administration in these artificial and indulgent days.

Coming in his strong early years to England, this virile and dramatic Scotsman settled in a Durham pit-village, Haswell by name. He espoused the calling of a pitman, and came, happily for him and for the world, under the influence of that hearty and intelligent Methodism to which the county of Durham owes so much. What a goodly company of ministers of various churches have emerged from the pits of Durham! And what an honourable band of lay preachers has had similar emergence! The life of a pitman affords ample opportunity for reflection, and the intervals of leisure

give chance of much reading to those who are inclined to ply the world of books. No marvel we owe so many potent preachers, clerical and lay, to the craft of the pitman! If Peter Mackenzie had a native reflectiveness, it was deepened by his occupation as a pitman, and if he had a native love of reading, that too was stimulated in the spare hours which that occupation afforded him.

It has been suggested that in his pre-converted days Peter Mackenzie was a vicious man, but that may be unhesitatingly denied. In those early times at Haswell he would be best described as a worldly man. He was never a libertine. Criminality was far from him. But he was utterly worldly. He had a "coltish nature" till it was changed by grace divine. He rollicked in the narrow present as if no infinite futurity stretched beyond it. He gambolled on the sordid globe as though no blue heaven were above him bent.

All was, however, suddenly and radically changed. A revival mission, as to-day it would be called, was being held in the little Methodist Chapel of the village in which Peter lived. Peter attended some of the services. The arrows of heaven pierced his heart. He realized that awful experience which evangelicals call "conviction of sin." A fellow-pitman led him to the "penitent form." I have seen and conversed with the man who guided Peter to that shrine of salvation. And in his happy old

age that old man's gladdest memory and holiest boast was that "through grace" he had been an instrument in Peter Mackenzie's conversion.

That conversion was of a noble type. It was definite and thorough. No mere ethical evolution was it, but a supernatural revolution; a miracle wrought on character; the rebirth of a human soul. When Peter Mackenzie surrendered himself to the Incarnate Saviour, and cried in a passion of penitence, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean," instantly, absolutely, irrevocably "old things" passed away, and all things became "new." He had accepted Christ as his Saviour, and in so doing had crossed the Rubicon, burned the bridges and destroyed the boats, nor did he ever dream of recrossing. He had come out of the land of sin, never more to return to it, and though often he "might have had opportunity to have returned" to the country from whence he came out, yet he "declared plainly" that he sought "a better country." And we may reverently declare that from that thrilling moment in the Durham pit-village to that solemn hour in Dewsbury town, when through Herculean toils he passed into Heaven's Sabbath-rest God was "not ashamed" of Peter Mackenzie "to be called" his "God," for He had prepared for "him" a city.

We trust the era of distinct and positive and thorough conversion will never pass away. There

is an ominous lack of the doctrine and of the experience in much modern religionism. Scarcely could we describe some religious people as "new creatures." They do not seem to have been "bathed," to use the Master's symbol. Quaintly said an old minister to his congregation, "Some of you have been starched without having been washed." Too often this appears to be so. Most emphatically it was not true of Peter Mackenzie. He was never starched, but he was thoroughly washed in the laver of regeneration. May the gospel of regeneration sound out like a trumpet of jubilee amid all the teachings of the churches in these latter days!

In the earliest days of his Christian life came the inward conviction that he must speak for Christ. But Peter was supremely anxious not to run without being sent, and not to run without tidings. He quivered with nervousness when he stood up to bear his earliest testimony. An old lay preacher who was with him the first time he spoke a few words from the platform of a little chapel told me that he so trembled, physically powerful as he was, that he had to grip Peter's legs and hold them tight, or he would have either fallen or beaten a swift retreat from the scene.

I have visited the little two-roomed cottage in Haswell in which Peter Mackenzie received his remarkable "call" to preach. It is a story that has been variously told, but I have reason to be-

lieve this to be the correct version of what took place. Three pitmen who were "exhorters" of the Methodist Church in the locality came to his cottage one Sunday morning and said substantially this: "Peter, we have to hold a meeting at . . . to-night, and we want you to go and give the people a talk." "Ah, my lads," replied Peter, "but I must ask the Lord about that." He was ever a man of prayer. "Now," said he, in his rough, rapid manner, "you sit down here, and I'll go upstairs and ask the Lord what He thinks, and I'll come down and tell you what He says." A fine example of simple faith in prayer, and such faith may be the deepest philosophy. Upstairs ran the vivacious Peter. He prayed eagerly and loudly for a few moments, then suddenly he sprang to his feet with the strong impression that if he would open his Bible at the eleventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and the eleventh and twelfth verses he would find God's immediate answer to his urgent prayer. Peter turned at once to his family Bible, and when he had opened it at the place of the Scripture which had been indicated, he read in a loud voice and in astonished tones. Get the perspective into your mind, my reader. It is of Peter those verses speak, and it is a Peter who reads. Three men are awaiting him in the room below. Now read what he read: "And, behold, immediately there were three men already come into the house where I was, sent

from Cæsarea unto me. And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting." Peter Mackenzie cried, "Hallelujah!" and he went with his three friends, and from that day was launched on his wonderful career as a preacher. It was a noteworthy call, and I think anyone would be disposed to conjecture that a man with such a call must have been destined to a wonderful ministry. Certainly his ministry was consonant with his singularly impressive call.

No man would have deprecated more heartily than Mr. Mackenzie the habit of turning to Scripture haphazardly for guidance on ordinary occasions. This may be an attempt to secure light without earnest effort. We are called to use our thinking powers and to consult competent advisers. Yet few will be willing to doubt that, as it was occasionally with John Wesley, so it was with Peter Mackenzie: God gave him at a crisis of his career special and definite direction by means of a passage of Scripture. Surely there was an angel in Peter's cottage that Sabbath day!

"Nothing doubting" represents with singular fidelity and felicity Peter Mackenzie's sense of a Divine call to preach the gospel. Never did he doubt that heavenly vision, and never was he disobedient to it. Nor did any ever doubt it who knew the man and his message. He was manifestly a "called apostle." Nothing has impressed me more than the repeated testimonies I have heard from

men who knew and heard Peter in those now far-distant days as to the manifest power and genius he showed from the very beginning of his preaching career. Rough and vehement as he was he never spoke without demonstrating that his gifts were of a unique order. An aged minister told me of the effect produced on him by one of Peter Mackenzie's earliest sermons. He announced as his text the classic proclamation, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." His opening sentences were these: "The text teaches us two things at least. That when God loves He loves a world; and that when God gives He gives a Son." My venerable friend, recounting that episode, said: "I had only to hear those words to know that a great preacher had arisen."

Yes. From the beginning it was evident alike to observers and to the multitude what manner of man Peter Mackenzie was. Often have I heard it declared that in sheer genius and power he never excelled his early years as a preacher. As a pitman —as a student—a capacity in which he only served a brief while; as a junior minister in Burnley and elsewhere; what wonderful scenes were witnessed! His path was as the morning dawn, which shone more and more unto the meridian. We will now address ourselves to the contemplation of some of the marks of the character and genius and work of one of the most remarkable figures which has appeared in the evangelical history of modern Britain.

## III

## THE BURNING SPIRIT AND THE VEILED FACE

GENIUS and character have been by no means always associated either in the State or in the Church. Alas! that in the Church of Christ we can often eulogize the intellect where we cannot applaud the soul. In the sacred ministry distinguished gifts have not seldom been allied with imperiousness, cynicism, self-assertion, and other shadows which have sadly darkened the fair landscape of the career.

Peter Mackenzie was singularly free from such moral and spiritual drawbacks. Concerning his genius there may be two opinions, but there can be no trace of dubiety about his character. He was spiritually full-orbed. We may unhesitatingly avow of this rugged Methodist orator, as Emerson did of Longfellow, that "he had a beautiful soul."

There was a seraphic element in our friend's character which all who knew him gratefully detected. He burned with unquenchable fire of holy zeal, and yet he covered his face and covered his feet in holiest humility before the Holy One whom he delighted to serve.

I think his fervent heat of sacred enthusiasm

impressed even casual observers. Whatever else Peter Mackenzie was, he was a man of intense religious zeal. And surely zeal, which is spiritual fire, is inseparable from an adequate conception of the Christian religion. Passionless Christianity is counterfeit Christianity. "There is in Christianity a world-conquering force which impels it at all risks to propagate itself," says Dr. Stalker. Mr. Mackenzie's religion was of that ardent type. He was all on fire and always on fire. Nor was it "strange fire." It was verily "pure celestial fire," the passion of his devotions in private as in public, the fervour of his very manner in the conduct of worship. How he kindled even in social converse at the mention of the Name of Jesus! Evidently this man longed to be like his Lord. Manifestly his grand ruling idea in life was to lead men to God in Christ. Bright and ardent shoots of everlastingness flashed through his flesh. He was the type and symbol of a zealous man. His angel was the angel of burning zeal.

There are few inquiries more profitable for discussion in the modern Church than this: What is the secret of Christian zeal? With all our studies of origins we sadly neglect this essential study. From what fount does the fiery stream of religious ardour flow? The great origination of zeal is experimental knowledge of things divine. We do not glow spiritually because we are so lament-

ably ignorant of spiritual things. If we knew by vivid experience the great Christian realities, they would become the passion of our lives. It was because the heavenly things were so real to him that Peter Mackenzie was so ardent about them. He was essentially, though not formally, an evangelical mystic. "All that you know I see," said a Christian mystic to a Christian philosopher. Such an avowal might have been made by the subject of these pages. He was a man of large spiritual intuitions. He had the blessedness of the pure in heart who see God. He had constant and profound religious experiences. Faith lent him its realizing light and verified to his experience the eternal things. This largely accounted for his intimate way of speaking of sacred things. He was at home with God. Colder souls who lacked these transporting experiences wondered at and deprecated his fervours. But our friend had ever with him "the secret of the Lord." Like the aforetime prophets, he "saw" the word of the Lord. God was the most real being in the universe to Peter Mackenzie. Christ was indeed and of a truth the living Christ to Him. The Holy Spirit was to him the imperial and all-pervasive energy of the worlds. Similarly clear was his vision of the sombre realities of the spiritual world. Satan was dreadfully real to him. He doubted not his personality. He dreaded his power. I remember

that when he was to deliver his lecture on "Satan: His personality, character, and power," in the City Temple, Dr. Parker was asked by one of his friends if he intended to be present. "No," replied the redoubtable Doctor, "I know too much about Satan already." But even the sapient Doctor might have received fresh illumination on that weird personality had he heard Peter Mackenzie pourtray it.

It was out of this deep knowledge, this mystical perception, that his tremendous zeal arose. He was red-hot, nay, he was white-hot. His manner attested his genuine spiritual fire. His terrific restless fervour was not due to mere temperament; it was essentially a spiritual effluence. So passionate was he that his soul shook his powerful body. Every nerve of his well-knit frame often quivered with an ethereal flame. His heart was on fire. Never in private or in public to his latest days could he hear the name of Jesus or listen to an exposition of religious truth without irrepressible emotion. I have sat in the same pew with him listening to a quiet and scholarly expositor, who calmly and lucidly expounded the one-hundred and tenth Psalm, and Mr. Mackenzie so punctuated the lovely exposition with "Amen," "Glory," "That's it," and other ejaculations that he almost threw the tranquil teacher off his balance. This enthusiasm at times took strange forms, but then our friend was a strange man. The zeal, however, was a

genuine and glorious zeal. The most delightful feature of his zeal was its sustainedness. He kept the passion fresh. It is not going one whit beyond the mark to affirm that he flamed as much at seventy as he had done at five and thirty. How intense he was to the very end! It never had to be said by him, as too often it might be predicated of Christian men by themselves, if they were candid:

Fires that shook me once, but now to silent ashes fall'n away,
Cold upon the dead volcano sleeps the gleam of dying day.

The sacred fires shook him mightily in his closing years, quite as mightily as in his earlier era. The last time I heard him preach he was all aglow—indeed incandescent. He passed to heaven in a chariot of fire.

It may be well to inquire as to the secret of his *sustained* zeal. How came it to pass that he flamed so fervently all the way through? I would ascribe it primarily to his wonderful prayerfulness, which we must presently contemplate. Zeal is fostered by prayer as by nothing else. Our decadent prayerfulness often explains our decadent fervour. Zeal must die if we restrain prayer. Peter Mackenzie's prayers rose like a fountain day and night. And the God who answereth by fire thus answered his importunate suppliant. Then his reflectiveness—already alluded to—is a great secret of the ever

augmented zeal of this apostolic man. He constantly mused and constantly the fire burned. That is the fell secret of much tepid religiosity today. We have lost the holy art of meditation. "You do not meditate, and therefore you are not impressed," says Newman in that marvellous sermon on Christ's Privations. We are too busy to ponder the eternal realities. And because we have "no vision" our fervour dies.

And yet another secret must be added. Peter Mackenzie's maintained zeal may in large degree be attributed to his sustained and increasing religious reading. He intermeddled with all manner of devotional and expository and theological books. Especially was he a constant reader of the Word of God. He treasured the treasury of truth. He emulated Bunyan and the kingly Puritans in his devotion to the Scriptures. It was his invincible habit to read and meditate therein. Permanent religious zeal must have ideas as well as emotions. Mr. Mackenzie ensured permanence for his passion by fuelling the fire with great ideas. It was ever augmenting his enthusiasm. So he never became an old man. Enthusiasm keeps men young.

In these days of frigid, "respectable," conventional religion, we need the example and stimulus of such zealous souls as Peter Mackenzie. There may be great zeal associated with a subdued manner, but whatever the manner let there be zeal.

Our fire may do more to win the world than our whitest light. It is very perilous for churches and individuals to lose their seraphic glow. This rare man's fervency of spirit, his spiritual fire, so well maintained through long and faithful years, is an enduring inspiration to all who have witnessed his great example. Peter Mackenzie has bequeathed a legacy of spiritual passion to the rising race of evangelical Christians. "O that all might catch the flame!"

If this servant of God had the burning spirit, his was also the veiled face. He was a man of genuine and deep reverence. Some have doubted of this. There have been those who have branded him as irreverent. They have judged him by certain of his utterances which seemed to contravene the spirit of reverence. But the contravention was only in the seeming.

No man should be judged by episodical utterances, especially when they have been made under abnormal conditions. Great charity is demanded towards impetuous natures amid the pressure of excited and exciting crowds. Such crowds everywhere waited upon this singular orator. He must be judged by the general trend and temper of his life, and so judged he was a truly and profoundly reverent man.

Does not the term reverence clamour for redefinition to-day? What is reverence? Rever-

ence is conventionally defined as awe. But that is a strangely inadequate definition. Awe may be manifested towards a tyrant, but never reverence. Manifestly, therefore, reverence is a grander quality than awe. Biblical reverence is a happy blend of awe, respect for the character, and love for the person. These elements were homed in the great heart of Peter Mackenzie.

Let it be remembered, too, in these days of accentuated ritualism that true reverence is not spectacular but spiritual. It is not a manner, a posture, an attitude. These may express reverence, but they are not essential reverence. The heart determines reverence. Abundant attitudinizings may be associated with slender reverence. Before we dub any man irreverent, determine of what spirit he is.

Reverence, moreover, is, like all other graces, expressed according to individuality. Temperament moulds the manifestation of reverence. Ere we determine any man's reverence we do well to ask the elementary question, " What sort of a man is he ? " What may be reverence in one man may be blasphemy in another. Now what manner of man was Peter Mackenzie ? He was embodied comicality. Fun flowed in his veins like the blood. Merriment tingled in his every nerve. He saw everybody and everything in the limelight of drollery. A man of that order cannot be expected

to manifest the spirit of reverence in the manner of one whose nature is prosaic, say of such as never perpetrated a witticism, or perceived one which any one else ever perpetrated. But Peter Mackenzie had the soul of reverence. One might have desired at times that there were more of the forms of reverence, but the spirit of reverence was always throned within. He trembled at God's word as few do. The Holy and Reverend Name astonished and thrilled him. He saw the sinfulness of sin as did the old Puritan believers, and as we should earnestly desire to do. He realized the ghastly disparity between God and man, heaven and earth, with a clearness we may sacredly covet. Eternal things were serious, if not always solemn, realities to this single-hearted Christian.

Always let us jealously guard the distinction between essential reverence and the ritualism of reverence. There may be abundance of the former where the latter is slight. We do not envy the glib-tongued and often censorious critics who can, prompted by an inadequate idea of reverence, point deprecatingly to such men as Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and Henry Ward Beecher, and Peter Mackenzie, and because they did not observe the ritual of reverence as do many, characterize them as irreverent. It is a slander. Men of deeper and truer and more Scriptural reverence never walked God's earth and graced it.

## IV

## TOWARDS GOD AND TOWARDS MAN

"I WILL that men pray *everywhere*." So Paul wrote to his beloved Timothy. And I always associate Peter Mackenzie with those grand words. What a lofty devotional ideal they establish! How few of us actualize that ideal! But it may be affirmed unhesitatingly that Peter Mackenzie did. I have never known a man who lived in the spirit of prayer more conspicuously than this man of God. Some, because of his overflowing drollery, have been surprised to learn this. Yet why should they have been? The deepest and devoutest natures have often been singularly humorous. Why should not a man who is steeped in humour be also saturated with prayer? The two things are not incompatible There is humour in God, else whence does humour emanate? No man needs an elongated face in order to fellowship with God.

Our friend lived in unceasing prayerfulness. He prayed literally everywhere. He prayed in the railway train, and one of his chief reasons for always riding first-class was that he might have privacy for prayer. He prayed in the cab. He

prayed as he walked along the streets. He prayed in the spare moments which so many fail to utilize. He prayed in the sick room. He prayed in the church. He prayed at all hours. Even at midnight he arose to pray. He bound his happy days together by perpetual prayer.

On the threshold of every house he entered he exclaimed, in tones which no pen or paper can reproduce, " Peace be upon this house and all who dwell here." And every house was enriched by the benediction thus invoked. No sooner had he entered a house and greeted the inmates with his tremendous handshake—to shake hands with him was comparable to getting one's hand into a vice —than he would say, " Just let us have a word of prayer before any one comes about." He would be down upon one knee ere his friends could collect their thoughts, and ere they were atmosphered with devotion he was ejaculating his inimitable " Amen," and was jumping around the room, albeit his seventy years, like a young roe or hart upon the mountains. The windows of this man's personality were always open towards Jerusalem. Prayer was his " vital breath " and his " native air."

His comicalities in public and private prayer, gross irreverence in any one else, were perfectly natural and reverent in him. He so lived in constant fellowship with God that he " talked " with Him. " Let him that readeth understand." Such

prayerfulness as this remarkable man had is the sign and seal of true holiness. Everything and everybody seemed to be remembered by him in prayer. At the close of the evening meal at a house where he was staying in the closing months of his life he conducted family prayer, and said, " O Lord, thy servant and handmaiden could not have entertained us better if they had been millionaires." He never forgot to pray for the minister of the church in which he officiated. All current events were laid before the Lord in prayer. He particularized before God as is seldom done. But all who knew him appreciated the deep devotion to which he gave such unwonted expression.

It was true of this devoted soul that he entered heaven with prayer. The words of the apostolic benediction were vibrant upon his lips as he was about to enter the home of God.

Easy it may be to criticize him for his whimsicalities and oddities, but it is not easy to outpray him. Rather would we emulate his devotions than criticize his peculiarities. He was a wrestling Jacob who oft struggled by the lonesome brook through the black night, but in the morning God blessed him there. In prayer Peter Mackenzie had " the pulses of a Titan and the thews of Anakim." Surely nothing is more needed in the life of modern Christians than a great enthusiasm of prayer !

Mr. Mackenzie was towards man as sagacious

as towards God he was prayerful. His judgement was notably sound. Many failed to see this. He not seldom failed to manifest it. But nevertheless as I knew him he was wise as he was witty, shrewd as droll, common-sensed as comical. His northern birth and uprearing perhaps account for this in no slight degree. Much of the northern iron was in his brain and blood. He had a definite knowledge of life. He knew man. But he also knew men. He was dowered with great perception of character and ability. Who could give shrewder and more apposite advice ? I have taken council of him at crises of my life and have found him much more reliable a guide than some supposedly wiser men.

I have seen him in critical company. Certain thought they were reckoning this funny man up, and perhaps they were, but he was reckoning them up, and could give the result in a flashing epigram, or a humorous phrase which they who heard could scarce forget. Often have I admired the sagacity he displayed in his attitude towards various types of men he had occasion to confront. How well he saw through all sorts and conditions of men ! I have known a man come up to Mr. Mackenzie who had never spoken to him before, and being under the mistaken impression that he could take liberties with him, he addressed him by his Christian name and said in " hail, fellow, well met " style " Well, Peter ! " And I felt pity for the man despite his

impertinence, for how Mr. Mackenzie sat on him! It was prompt and emphatic. It was indeed no joke when he sat on any one, for except they had a special amount of gutta-percha in their constitution they did not easily rebound. I have seen him in the presence of a bore. A man sought to explain something which Mr. Mackenzie knew at least as well as he did. He sat patiently with a serio-comic look which often misled the unobservant. As the bore bored and his auditor listened, he dropped a long word, and "Peter" saw his chance and said, "Excuse me interrupting you, sir, but would you kindly explain the meaning of that big word you used just now?" The gentleman had not a faculty for definition, and no dictionary happening to be at hand he fell, to his great humiliation, into the pit that the witty "Peter" digged for him.

I have seen him in the company of a very pompous party, and when the individual retired, doubtless under the idea that he had made a great impression, Mr. Mackenzie turned to his companions and said, "My word! He's a big gun! What a pity he wasn't present at the Creation. If he had been, he might have given the Almighty a few such useful suggestions!" A better satire on pomposity it would be hard to discover even in humorous literature.

He evinced sagacity in his appreciation of most varied genius and personality. He was catholic in

his appreciation. He could sympathize with forms of ability and of character with which it might have been expected he would have no affinity. Though he lived in the east he could appreciate dwellers in the west. He saw genius in those who saw none in him. Was not this true sagacity?

He was eminently characterized by that "discretion" and "prudence" and "wisdom" which Scripture assures us have a spiritual origin and a spiritual significance. His life reinforces the bracing precept, "Keep sound wisdom and discretion." His career reminds us of what we are all apt to forget, that prudence is a buttress of piety.

Withal Peter Mackenzie was a man of fine Christian courtesy. This charmed all who knew him and indeed it arrested even those who but casually met him. His right to be called a gentleman none can successfully dispute. Condescending allusions are at times made to his "humble origin" and "lowly birth." Did we not know to the contrary, we might suppose from certain comments on Mr. Mackenzie's early days that he was singular as a minister in coming originally from the working classes. So far is this from being the case that the ministry of all churches is to-day considerably recruited from the working-class. Nor is there any discredit in this circumstance, since the Son of God was a working man when he made earth luminous with his presence.

Peter Mackenzie's beginning was no meaner than that of many of his contemporaries. His father was a small farmer. If he had next to no schooling, it was rather because he had no taste for the conventions of school life than that his parents were so abnormally poor. When he settled as a youth in Durham county and became a pitman he found it by no means a poverty-stricken occupation. And there are many ex-pitmen in the ministries of the various churches, to their credit be it stated.

But apart from all questions of birth and upbringing Peter Mackenzie had all the finest instincts of a gentleman. Books of etiquette do not make true gentlemen; they only put on a veneer; and too often, under pressure, the veneer splits. True gentility is the inspiration of Heaven. And Peter Mackenzie was a gentleman by nature and yet more abundantly by the grace of God. How invariably courteous he was his hosts and fellow-guests can attest. He has been spoken of as a rough man. He was certainly never such socially. He was courteous even to delicacy. In private he was affectionately sympathetic. Never did he speak a word which would have brought a blush to the most maidenly cheek. He was never abrupt, rough, dogmatic. It was not his habit to absorb all the conversation. He was not a Sir Oracle who expected when he spoke that no dog should bark. Nor was he one of those who profess holiness and depre-

ciate everybody. Always was he chivalrous to women, tender to children, kindly to all. He had that supreme mark of a gentleman, that he was unwilling to give pain. His courtesy was especially marked to those who had suffered adversity, to the aged, to the dejected. Faith and love found adequate and lovely expression in his sweet courtesy. For Peter Mackenzie may be claimed the encomium which Tennyson lavished on his departed friend—

> And thus he bore without abuse,
> The grand old name of gentleman,
> Defamed by every charlatan
> And soiled by all ignoble use.

## V

## "THE LARGER HEART, THE KINDLIER HAND."

PERHAPS the most outstanding feature of this good man was his simply boundless beneficence. Certainly he was a proverb of generosity in his own denomination. "God loveth a cheerful giver"—then He must have loved Peter Mackenzie, for he was a prince of cheerful givers. Some of our exegetes will have it that the Greek word rendered "cheerful" is so vigorous a word that it requires such a term as "hilarious" to represent its force. "God loveth an *hilarious* giver." There are very few hilarious givers; resignation rather than hilarity represents the spirit in which most people give. But Peter Mackenzie was an hilarious giver. He simply revelled in giving. Sun-like and flower-like it was his nature to give. He was, as all who knew him can testify, a royal giver. He scattered his money profusely and even prodigally. He had a supreme incapacity for anything mean or niggardly. Was there ever a more liberal soul? His example is a noble and kindling study in generosity.

He might have been an opulent man had he so

chosen. If "the jingling of the guinea" had been such music in his ear as it has been in some ears, he would have achieved great wealth. Considering his phenomenal popularity and his protracted ministry his opportunity of money-making was extensive. But he died a comparatively poor man. He remarked one day to a friend who had remonstrated with him for his generosity, "If I have one threepenny bit more than I ought to have when I cross the Jordan it will sink me." Sure am I he did not sink when he crossed the unbridged and unbridgeable river!

None can say that Mackenzie robbed the churches. They could never avow that they made this Abraham rich. How village churches and small-town churches and impoverished city churches bless his memory for his extraordinary liberality to them! None other of their special ministerial visitors gained them such revenue and none other took less in return. He could not tolerate being burdensome to already over-burdened churches.

And he lavished his gifts wherever he went. Frequently he would pass on to a poor and afflicted minister or friend more than he had received as fee. I can scarcely imagine a millionaire thinking so lightly of notes and sovereigns and half-sovereigns as this benevolent Methodist preacher did. And as for silver, it was with him as in Solomon's day, "silver was nothing accounted of." His gifts of

books were remarkable. What volumes he dispensed! All over the country he enriched ministerial libraries which most needed enrichment. He did good by stealth and would have blushed to find it fame.

What a friend of the poor he was! He would not allow a beggar to be sent from his door. This may not be prudent but it was kind. He has been known to clear the dinner-table of its bounty because some poor woman and her children appealed to him just as the dinner-gong was about to sound. In his pastoral charges his private liberality can never be estimated. He would visit local almshouses and carry a basketful of packets of tea for the old women and of tobacco for the old men.

To his colleagues and to students and lay preachers he was remarkably generous in return for the slightest service and often for no service at all. When I was a student I several times supplied for him at week-evening services. He would ask me to bring fellow-students with me to tea at his house where his hospitable wife entertained us generously—he taking care to pay our expenses and to give a fee to the one who had preached for him. He would say in his queer style, "Do you think the hairy man will let you come?"—alluding to the respected Principal of the College. "If you will come, I'll give you 'a sovereign balm,'" he

would wittily write. And always he was at least as good as his kindly word.

If you would know how generous he was, let me refer you to the servants of the houses where he stayed. He never left a house without giving a gift to the domestics. The last time he stayed at my house he was the same liberal giver as aforetime. When he was leaving in the morning, as he stood in the entrance-hall, not knowing the name of the servant, he cried, "Mary, my darling!" The blushing girl hurried towards him and he put a half-crown into her hand and a benediction upon her head. And is it not a grand thing to scatter seeds of kindness even in so unconventional a fashion as one passes through the arid fields of time?

The children of the homes he was guested in knew his wonderful and humorous liberality. They were amused at the way his capacious pockets were filled with threepenny pieces. These were part of his identity. Everybody heard of Peter Mackenzie's threepenny bits. He would often have almost literally a pocketful of them. For this purpose he had cleared many of the collection-boxes where he had last officiated, he submitting larger coin, and usually he found scope for such a transaction. He would give at least a threepenny piece to every child in the house at which he stayed. Indeed he would in some cases stay annually at

the same house for twenty successive years; the boys and girls had rounded into young men and women, and he would amuse them greatly by exclaiming in his strange manner, "Are you getting over old to have a threepenny bit now?" The children delighted in his little pieces of silver, and I heard of a young lady who had a bracelet made of threepenny pieces which Peter Mackenzie had given her in her childhood.

He was a wonderful friend to the cabmen all over the country. He might well be called the "Cabman's Friend." In his later years he scarcely walked anywhere. He said to me one day, "We hear a great deal now about these athletes, these champion walkers and runners. I never could do anything in that way. I've always had a wonderful talent for sitting." "A talent for sitting!" That phrase almost merits classification with some of Carlyle's peculiar talents, as his talent for silence and for forgetting. Many have my good friend's talent for sitting and they exercise it, but not invariably with such profit to others as marked the exercise of his talent. It was remarkable how well the Jehus knew him all the land over, but specially in the Midlands and in the north of England. What a scene there was at the cabstand of Dewsbury railway station when he landed home after his week's travels! There was often a miniature of Babel! "My turn this week, Mr. Mackenzie," one would

cry. "No, sir, it's mine," exclaims another. "Nay, sir, I've not had you for a month." "Nay, Mr. Mackenzie, it's six weeks since I drove you." He would lift up his hands and with smiling face would reply, "Aye, I'd like to ride with the lot of you." And I believe that had it been possible he would have done so. Every Christmas he gathered all the cabmen of Dewsbury together and gave them a splendid Christmas tea. No marvel that one of the most exquisite wreaths sent to his funeral bore the pathetic dedication, "A tribute to the memory of our friend, the Rev. Peter Mackenzie, from the cabmen of Dewsbury."

He never gave a cabman the exact fare. I met him at a railway station on one occasion to take him to my house. When we alighted from the cab I was about to pay the cabby, but he, Peter Mackenzie, said, "Get away with you; I've got a deal more money than you have." He insisted on paying. This particular cabby didn't appear to know him and moreover was a glum-looking individual. He was deceived, too, by Mr. Mackenzie's dramatic, serio-comic expression of face. "What's your fare, my man? Now, mind, the exact fare, the exact fare!" said the ever-humorous Peter. The cabby thought he had a skinflint to deal with, and replied with the peculiar emphasis of which his order are capable, "The *fare* is eighteen-pence." "You're not going to charge that for two of us, are you?"

"Yes, sir." "What? For that short distance?" "Yes, sir." "Are you *sure* that's the fare?" "Yes, sir." "Why," exclaimed Peter, "I wouldn't drive a wheelbarrow for that! Here's half-a-crown, and the Lord take care of you in your journeyings." Then the cabby's face was a treat to witness. It had been a study in physiognomy to see the face of the man drop in the earlier part of the interview; now, as Mr. Mackenzie said, "his face lighted up like an illuminated clock." And our friend had a rare faculty for illuminating the clocks.

Frequently this generous Methodist preacher gave a cabman double fare and even more. I have known him, because his cabbies quarrelled as to which should have him, engage both, and send his bag in one cab whilst he occupied the other. A curious way of securing the beatitude of the peace-maker! I have known him on emerging from a church where he has been preaching or lecturing pay the cabman without letting his host know and then at the journey's end he has allowed the host to pay again and has rejoiced in the double portion secured by the cabby. Seldom have the tribe of the cabmen known so generous a benefactor as Peter Mackenzie.

What a friend of the railway men he was! All over the English lines he was a quaintly familiar figure. The porters rejoiced to see him. They

gave him ducal attention. They buzzed around him like bees about a fragrant flower, for they scented the tips from afar. One would carry his bag, another his rug, and a third would have carried *him*, portly as he was. I have been aware of him giving a porter half-a-sovereign. If he heard of sorrow or need in their families, he would bestow yet more liberal gifts. "Get yourself a nice juicy pear," he would say to a porter broiling at his work on a midsummer day, and he put a sixpence into his hand for the purpose.

He had thoughts of kindness, too, for railway people whom the public forget. The chief clerk in one of the metropolitan stations said that when Peter Mackenzie came to that station he would make his way to the booking office door, and, responding to his vigorous knock the clerks would find him with the *Graphic* and *Illustrated News* and quite a pile of the week's pictorials, and he would say, "Here are some nice pictures and some nice reading to cheer you up when you are not booking people." The clerks were delighted to hear his ringing and rejoicing tones as he would come to the office window and shout, "First single to Leeds, Hallelujah!" The engine drivers and stokers were special objects of his sympathetic attention. One could hardly get him away from the station if one met him when he was in one of his more buoyant moods. "I must just keep you a few minutes," he would say.

"I have come a long way with the poor fellows, and must have a word with them." Then he would walk along—that peculiar gait and form of his attracting many onlookers—to the engine, and he would address the driver and stoker. "My word! You're dab hands at your work. We've whizzed along. May I often ride with you! Here's a shilling each, and may the Lord preserve you continually." Thence he would march to the guard's van, praising God audibly as he went, and he would address the laughing guard as if he were addressing a congregation. "Aye, but you're the best superintendent I ever travelled under. What a comfort you are to me in my old age! Not a hair of my head has perished. God bless you and take care of you. Here's a half-crown for you."

The world is surely colder for the withdrawal of so kind and generous a personality. His liberality cheered and comforted many. He was ever kindlier to his kind. And all was done of love to the Redeeming Christ. The love of God wrought in him the love of man. Andrew Bonar used to say, "Be sure you are becoming holier if you are growing kinder." A fine conception of holiness that! My dear and crowned friend was progressively holy in being progressively kind. His God was love and assuredly all the days of his helpful life he walked with God.

Having long known Mr. Mackenzie intimately, I

without hesitation describe him as a saint. He was a saint in the New Testament signification of that greatly abused term. I once heard Henry Ward Beecher deplore the conventionalities which have encrusted the word "saint," and he remarked in his racy fashion, "Some people nowadays don't think a man's a saint unless he's a very thin man. Who ever heard of a fat saint?" But Peter Mackenzie was a fat saint. He may not have been conventionally a saint, but he was one of the noblest examples of entire sanctification I have ever beheld. He had every element of Christian sanctity. "God is love." And the holiness of love graced our friend with high grace. He may not have been cut after the pattern approved of self-appointed judges of holiness, but he was distinctly a *Christian* saint. How kind, loving, self-sacrificing, spiritually-minded he was! He reminded us of Jesus. He was "as his Master, even as every one shall be when he is perfected." And surely Jesus-likeness is the ideal of "Christian perfection." Certain it is that multitudes have had a higher appreciation of Christ and of Christianity because they have known Peter Mackenzie. Think what any one may of his abilities or of his services, none can fail to have been enamoured of his lovely character. He was a "happy warrior," and every "man of arms" might well wish to fight the good fight, finish the course, and keep the faith as did this noble man of God.

His sanctity was so genial. Holiness has so often been unattractive. No winsomeness has lent it glamour. Love has not irradiated it. But in Peter Mackenzie love ruled. I have spoken of his generosity of deed. He was quite as generous in word. The law of kindness was on his tongue. Like Augustine he "loved to love." It was his joy to eulogize. George Meredith describes praise as "our fructifying sun," and our friend delighted to pour the golden sunlight on his fellows. His brethren's reputation was safe in his keeping. No expression of detestation is too strong for the conduct of those who depreciate their fellow-workers in the eyes of their hosts as they move about among the churches. Some have done this who have made lofty professions of holiness. Not so Peter Mackenzie. This was foreign to his nature. Too great and good was he for such meanness. He was the soul of honour, of Christian chivalry, of brotherly kindness. "The fruit of the spirit" was "kindness" in this noble man.

He never lost an opportunity of praising others. Many have owed much to him for introduction to pulpits and to churches. When others hinted a fault he indicated a virtue. He delighted to have people thought well of. If he could add sunshine to any life, he would rejoice to do it. He has instituted many a friendship. Indeed he went further, and facilitated not a few matrimonial arrangements

and several happy marriages are to be ascribed to his genial and wise suggestions. If in any way he could help any one his joy was fulfilled.

How supremely genial he was! Always bright was he. Cheeriness was an inseparable element of his individuality. His name evoked a smile among all who knew him. He brightened the dullest day by his blithesome presence. There was always a south window in this spacious soul. He lived on the sunny side of life. In the Lord he bade all men rejoice, and again he said rejoice. For everybody he had a heartening word. His tone of voice was inspiring. Dull care was banished by his cheery salutation. It is surely no small service to cheer and enliven others in these days of stress and strain. He had rare ability to shorten long faces.

Very gracefully did Peter Mackenzie grow old. He became sunnier as he aged. He seemed to have inbreathed the optimism of Browning—

> Grow old along with me,
> The best is yet to be,
> The last of life,
> For which the first was made.

What a happy old man he was! He had no pessimism, no censoriousness, no dissatisfaction. He appeared to grow younger as he grew older. So lame often that he had to walk with two sticks he yet was buoyant, hilarious, magnetic to the last.

He had sweet light at eventide. The "invasive rush of the vandal years" never robbed him of his cheer. Shall we not all do well to look beyond the shadows to the far light as he did? Seated by the Saviour's side as was Peter Mackenzie, we shall gratefully exclaim at the end of the feast, as did he, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."

Such, roughly outlined, was the character of this remarkable Methodist orator. His life is a spiritual tonic. His example is a perennial inspiration. It is easier to believe in God, in Christ, in the Bible, in goodness, because we have known such a man. All praise to the gracious Master who made His servant thus complete!

## VI

# A PREACHER OF THE WORD WHO MINDED HIS BUSINESS

A QUAINT old "sermon taster," himself a notable preacher, once remarked to me, "Whenever God goes out of His way to make a preacher I go out of my way to hear him." And it is well to do so. Seldom, however, does God go out of His way to make a preacher. The modern pulpit has had many able men, some clever men, but rarely a genius. Genius always has been and ever must be infrequent. One is sometimes inclined to fear lest our elaborate collegiate and literary apparatus for the training of preachers should tend to the repression of certain types of genius. Such repression would be a calamity to the pulpit and to the Church. We need an inclusive ministry. No one kind is *the* kind. Let pulpit-genius be variegated.

Peter Mackenzie was indeed a genius. God went out of His way to fashion this preacher. It is a definition of a genius that he is "one who has such a combination of mental powers as enables

him to produce extraordinary effects." Gauged by that definition it would be difficult to impeach the genius of this distinguished man. He had a combination of mental powers. Had he never cracked a joke in public he would have stood in the front rank of modern preachers. He was greatly underrated as to his mental ability. No prominent Methodist preacher has ever been so under-estimated in this regard. I know of no minister of his denomination who has said so many original, brilliant, striking things as Peter Mackenzie said. Often he said them ruggedly. Sometimes he violated the proprieties. Not seldom he put things so strangely that unobservant hearers did not discern the intrinsic excellence of the sayings. He dropped lustrous gems from very rugged caskets. He was once remonstrated with for not clothing his thoughts sufficiently well and his ready reply was, "Why they often come out so quickly that I can scarcely get their shirts on much less any other clothing." Yet even his shirtless creations were very noble. It is a delusion to suppose that wit was his only mental resource. The inordinateness of his wit often obscured his greater qualities. His best reputation suffered by reason of his fun. Since his death many have realized, as they failed to do previously, what a solid basis his popularity and influence had. And he produced extraordinary effects. His popularity may be

taken as an immediate illustration. It was phenomenal. I know of no other preacher who could on week days attract such multitudes as Peter Mackenzie did. Through some forty years he had scarcely a rival as to popularity. Let it be remembered that his visits to towns or villages were as a rule annual. Yet the passing years never diminished the crowds. He did not come in connexion with some great celebration, he simply came to help a local church. But his coming inevitably made the occasion great. I do not think even Mr. Spurgeon would have drawn such *annual* crowds all over the kingdom through long years as Mr. Mackenzie did. Many men can secure a large assembly once or twice if they go under popular auspices and with ample advertisement. Heralded by paragraphs and articles in local or denominational papers they may be greeted by a multitude. But to go yearly, and that with little advertisement, to preach on a week-day afternoon and lecture in the evening for no council or association, or assembly but only for an individual church—that is the test of a genuine popularity. Mr. Mackenzie abundantly bore that test. Nothing but genius can account for so wide and abiding a popularity as his. I would emphasize the fact that his reputation was neither created nor sustained by the press. A man may be the favourite of an editor and may be industriously

written up by that editor, but on each successive visit to a locality the attendance will diminish except he be essentially a popular preacher. A mere newspaper popularity is ephemeral. A "religious" newspaper will sometimes give the impression that its favourites are favourites of the multitude, but let them abide the test Mr. Mackenzie endured so remarkably; let them go quietly to a town, and go annually, and go again and again; then if still the great concourse gathers, they have demonstrated their genuine popular power. Cliques and partialities, "booming," and all such methods, fail of *permanent* results. The people themselves ultimately determine who are their prophets.

Trust the people in these matters! They know to whom the sceptre belongs. And though in itself popularity may be little, yet a great and enduring popularity has a significance which it is futile to evade or to deny.

Mere eccentricity would not have sustained Mr. Mackenzie's popularity through the years. Probably many went to hear him merely because of his humour and dramatism, but many more went because of his originality, his spiritual inspiration, his real instructiveness in scriptural and in experimental religion. Dr. Johnson would have it that nothing odd lasts. It is profoundly true. Mere oddity may attract for a while, but it has no per-

manent popularity. Only inspired genius can defy the ravages of time. Peter Mackenzie won the palm and retained it by sheer force of ability.

We were talking together one day about preachers —a subject on which he always kindled—and he remarked, "There are some men about whose intellectual gifts we are obliged to be silent, we have to fall back upon their moral qualities." Certainly he was not himself one of that class. It is beside the mark to describe him as "only a joker," "a comedian," "a mere humorist." Solid and brilliant powers appertained to him. The quality of his fame will increase with the years though the quantity must decrease. When the disadvantage of mannerism is vanished and we are face to face with his utterances I venture to predict that he will be recognized as an outstanding genius of the nineteenth century pulpit. How he roused his auditory! He often played upon their emotions as does a skilled musician upon the keys of an instrument. What dramatic effects, now pathetic and now humorous, he produced! He truly gave full proof of his genius.

It was as a preacher he won his earliest fame. Before he commenced to lecture he demonstrated his gift in the pulpit. And even in lecturing he was still a preacher. Strip his lectures of their accretions and they were sermons. Newman Hall described Morley Punshon's lectures as "disguised

sermons" and such were the lectures of Peter Mackenzie.

Yes, it is as a preacher this remarkable man must be contemplated. "Peter" began to preach soon after his conversion, whilst he was yet a pitman in the village of Haswell, near Sunderland. I have visited the village and seen the little chapel in which he publicly gave himself to God and the little cottage in which he lived when God's call came to him to preach the gospel. He felt from the day of his conversion that he ought to speak publicly for his Saviour.

Mr. Mackenzie was not a college-made preacher, but he was a heaven-inspired preacher. Possibly most people preferred to hear him lecture. I never lost an opportunity of listening to his inimitable lectures, and will presently speak of them, but I vastly preferred to hear him preach. And if I represent a minority in expressing such a preference, it is a considerable and not unintelligent minority. On Sunday mornings, especially in his own "circuit," for he rarely left his own pulpit on Sunday, he delivered every way notable sermons. On week-day afternoons all over the kingdom he preached sermons electrical with genius and aflame with spiritual fervour. His often grotesque delivery and outrushing humour did not make thoughtful hearers oblivious of his genuine pulpit-power. I have heard him preach sermons that had every

attribute of noble preaching. "Some of the greatest sermons I have ever heard I have heard from Peter Mackenzie," a scholarly minister remarked to me. And I am prepared to endorse such a verdict from my own experience. I have listened to discourses from this unconventional preacher that were great in homiletical skill, great in general conception and outlook, great in expository insight, in reflection, in eloquence, in illustration, and best of all, great in spiritual vision and in the impingement of the truth upon the conscience of the listener. Many of his best sermons were homiletical cities that lay foursquare.

Mr. Mackenzie delighted to preach. The work of the pulpit was his sacred passion, and the passion never lost its freshness. I have rarely known a preacher to whom the work of preaching was so dominant a delight. He lost the duty in the joy. He consistently regarded his lecturing as a phase of preaching. Such an enthusiasm had he for this form of service that he stipulated that whenever he lectured in the evening he should preach in the afternoon. I have known him refuse to visit a place again because a lecture had been arranged without an afternoon preaching-service. Some ministers have cheerfully condoned that omission!

No modern minister of his denomination has *preached* as much as Mr. Mackenzie did. At least I am not aware of any instance. Some have re-

marked that it was a pity he lectured so frequently. I am apt to ask how often on an average he lectured per week. He usually lectured every evening except Sunday. (As a matter of fact he often lectured in his own "circuit" on Saturday nights.) But how often did he, as a rule, preach per week? Not only on Sundays but every afternoon except Saturdays. He used to say in quaint pitman's phraseology, "I do double shift every day." The physical exertion involved was prodigious. Had he not been a Hercules in virility, he would never have seen his threescore years and ten.

He lived in the sermonic atmosphere. Preaching was never mere "shop" to him. Pitiable is the man to whom this transcendent vocation is sordid "shop"! He was one of those pulpiteers some of us rejoice to meet: he was ever ready and eager for a talk about preaching. I never met him in his later years without his asking me in his characteristic manner, "What text have you got upon the stocks now, and how are you going to take it up?" He himself always had a new sermon simmering in his mind and in his heart.

I shall never forget my last railway journey spent in his blithe and inspiriting companionship. We had the carriage to ourselves, and he said, "I'm making another new sermon." Let it be remembered that he was without a pastoral charge and was then a septuagenarian and it might have been

condoned had he made systematic use of old pulpit matter. Said he, in his strange tones, which can never be reproduced on the printed page, "I'll give you a bit of it if you like." I of course readily consented. And I can see him now as he stood up in the railway carriage. He held aloft and brandished a half sheet of note-paper—all the manuscript he used in the pulpit or out of it. He began as if addressing a great congregation, and said, "Now firstly observe." When he got to "secondly" he was gesticulating exuberantly and his grimaces were mirth-provoking. And when he reached "thirdly" he was beginning to jump. I shall not soon forget that vivacious old preacher whose heart was so effervescent with the good matter that he discoursed—an everyway noticeable discourse—to an andience of one in a railway train. So did he joy in his preaching that I have known him go right through a sermon he had just delivered in a chapel to some member of the household wherein he was a guest because that person had been detained at home. He was on a certain occasion staying at the house of the minister of the chapel in which he had been preaching. The minister had been debarred from attending the service because of a severe cold from which he happened to be suffering. When Mr. Mackenzie returned to the Manse he delivered the discourse from first to last to the minister, almost as he had uttered it in the chapel,

and when he concluded he said to his reverend friend, "You are one of the most intelligent and attentive and appreciative congregations I ever addressed in my life!"

The ruling passion was strong in our beloved friend's death. He was making, or let us rather say receiving, sermons on his death bed. Tennyson wrote one of his loveliest poems on his dying bed. It is seldom, however, that we hear of a preacher devising new discourses in the valley of the shadow of death. Peter Mackenzie did. He said to his daughter, "I've made two new sermons whilst I've been lying here. One is on 'The Rock a sure foundation,' and the other is on 'Thine eye shall see the King in His beauty.'" Then, dramatist as he was, he said, pointing upwards, "And I am going to see the King in His beauty." So, like John Wesley, in his closing hours on earth he revelled in the work which through the consecrated years had been his dear delight. I have no doubt he might have said then what Haliburton said on his death-bed, "This is the best pulpit I was ever in."

Peter Mackenzie exclaimed in his dying hours, "Oh, how I would like to preach again! It is a grand work! I have had a happy life." And he assuredly preached right impressively from the most momentous pulpit a preacher can have—a Christian death-bed.

If I drew a moral or pointed an appeal from my friend's grand devotion to what Edward Irving called "the royal ordinance of preaching," it would be to this effect. Let all the churches keep watch and ward over their pulpits. The pulpit is still "the most important guard, support, and ornament of virtue's cause." There is always confronting us the subtle peril that we shift the centre of gravity in our churches from the pulpit to some other quarter. This is a fatal danger. God still ordains preaching as His supreme ordinance. The churches are strong with genuine strength only so long as they resound with evangelical preaching. No organization, however elaborate and "up to date," can supersede the ministry of preaching. Nor can any ritual really compensate for its lack. Pastoral visitation, admirable as it is, cannot be an effective substitute for preaching. Now abideth organization, visitation, preaching; but the greatest of these is preaching.

Let our theological colleges see to it that they shape and fashion preachers. Let all preachers emulate Mr. Mackenzie in this, that they maintain all through their ministry an indisputable pulpit freshness and power. Thank God for all faithful and helpful pulpit-ministers! Peter Mackenzie was a singular type, but his enthusiasm, his industry, his freshness, all preachers do well to emulate. There is room for every manner of effective and useful

preacher. Diversity of gifts is greatly to be desired. I trust never to see the day when there will be no room in our pulpits for men of the order of Peter Mackenzie. Away with a system of Dutch gardening applied to candidates for the pulpit. We do not desire a ministry moulded into a few stereotyped forms. Every man who has a message should be allowed to tell it in his own way. Who can ascertain the full fruition of the wonderful preaching of this man of God who early in his Christian course "began to be mighty upon the earth" and whose might knew no decline?

## VII

## A MINISTERIAL LECTURER

PETER MACKENZIE was a famous lecturer. For forty years, well-nigh, he was known as a hero of the religious lecture-platform. I well remember his saying to me when Morley Punshon died, "I am cock-of-the-walk now." And beyond doubt he was supreme in popularity among the ministerial lecturers of recent years. There have been and are those who have deplored his giving himself so extensively to lecturing. Some object to all ministers who essay the lecture-platform. Nor can it be denied that some ministers have deteriorated spiritually, and in respect of their preaching-power, because of their absorption in the work of lecturing. It is to be feared that in such cases the preacher of the gospel has been sunk in the professional lecturer. The minister has rivalled secular lecturers. He has lectured for secular institutions; he has degenerated into a mere entertainer. His lectures have been in no wise "disguised sermons." His evening dress, his scale of fees, his circulars, and the whole tone of his deliverance has proclaimed,

"Exit the prophet; enter the entertainer!" In such cases we see a ministerial tragedy.

But who has not happily known ministers who have lectured much and yet never suppressed their primary vocation? Lecturing may be among the "all means" by which "some" are "saved." I have just alluded to the eloquent Morley Punshon. He is a noble example of a minister whose lecturing never spoiled his preaching or vitiated his magnificent ministry. People were converted under those thrilling lectures of his. A lecture delivered by a preacher with a preacher's motive and in a preacher's spirit may be indeed and of a truth a means of grace.

It has been, however, objected that though in many cases lecturing may be legitimate in a minister, yet in Mr. Mackenzie's case it is to be regretted. Why? Because he began his ministry as an evangelist, or what is known as a Mission Preacher. "Better," say some, "had he never diverged from that work to adopt the rôle of a lecturer." I must frankly say I do not in any degree sympathize with such a criticism, and the more I revolve the assertion the less am I able to receive it. I may be allowed to say this the more candidly because all my sympathies are alike evangelical and evangelistic.

It appears to be a very narrow suggestion, and I am disposed to discredit it on that score. God fulfils Himself in many ways, as in other spheres

so in the evangelical ministry. Evangelically-minded people are somewhat apt to be narrow in this relation. We are ready, too ready, to deem that only by "Missions" and certain evangelistic methods can men be renewed and established in grace. As a matter of fact some seem to think very lightly of any minister if he be not what is technically termed an evangelist. I am assured that Peter Mackenzie reached motley thousands by his lectures who would not have been attracted to mission services. He won many to God by those unique lectures of his.

Moreover, I am convinced that God guided him to his ministry of lecturing. Would the All-Father let a praying saint like Peter Mackenzie drift? I cannot believe it. Those who pray are guided, and our honoured friend did not slip out of his providential groove when he gave himself to lecturing. He was called of God to that peculiar mode of service.

Then let me emphatically say that he was an evangelist all the way through his memorable ministry. We need to distinguish more than we do between conventional evangelism and essential evangelism. Many a man is the latter who is not the former. To hold missions and adopt the apparatus of accustomed evangelism is not at all essential to being an evangelist. Mr. Spurgeon did not hold evangelistic missions, but he was surely

the greatest evangelist of the last century. Was he not the greatest since John Wesley? Dr. Parker never held evangelistic missions, but he was a wonderful evangelist. Dr. Maclaren has not been accustomed to conduct such missions, but what a superb illustration and example is he of cultured evangelism.

For many years Mr. Mackenzie held no evangelistic missions, but he was always and everywhere an evangelist. He was an evangelistic lecturer. "Every man in his own order," "Every man as he is called." "There are diversities of operations." We do well to look along the line such texts indicate. Surveying that line I am persuaded my beloved friend was a great evangelist on the lecture-platform. I heard nearly every lecture he delivered, for I was accustomed to hear him regularly from my childhood up to his passing, and I cannot recall a single lecture in which there was not something tantamount to an evangelistic appeal. It is a great thing to be able to say, and I rejoice with great joy to affirm this of so popular a lecturer. He made us laugh till we ached, but ere he closed he pleaded for the Saviour, he entreated us with much entreaty to be reconciled to God.

I shall never forget the evangelism of the last lecture but one I heard from him. He had preached in the afternoon in what was then my own chapel, and he proceeded to announce the lecture he was

to deliver that evening. If ever he was humorous even to the point of comicality it was when he made such announcements. I once heard him in a little village chapel intimate a Public Tea which was to follow that summer afternoon's service. It was already spread in the schoolroom which adjoined the chapel, and he had come through the schoolroom to the chapel and seen the banquet. Said he, "My beloved friends, there is to be a Public Tea at the close of this service! A Public Tea at the close of this service!!" He had a curious habit alike in preaching and lecturing of repeating a sentence, and that with remarkable intonations and strange jerks. Probably such repetition was a reminiscence of his early boyhood in Scotland, for I am told that the old Scottish preachers made a practice of this for the sake of emphasis, though his dramatic mode of repetition was certainly not inherited from that source. He then proceeded to pourtray the tea, and said, "My dear friends, I would advise you all to stay, for it is to be a wonderful tea. The tables were groaning when I came through. They'll be groaning harder than ever now. There are all manner of delicacies. The tea will taste strong of everything but the water. And there will be as much ham as would make an orthodox old Jew say, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.'"

He was only less comical on the afternoon to

which I was referring but now. His announcement ran something like this: "My beloved friends, I am to deliver a lecture in this chapel to-night! To deliver a lecture in this chapel to-night!! The chair will be taken at half-past seven. At half-past seven!! Our dear chairman will not, I think, take up much time"—and as the chairman was present it was a suggestive hint. "The subject of the lecture is 'Prince Absalom: his privileges, perversity, and punishment. His privileges, perversity, and punishment!' You may be interested to know that lately I have had Absalom's mule clipped, and I have had it rather prettily caparisoned, and it will trot off here at about eight o'clock to-night with Prince Absalom upon its back." It may be imagined the congregation did not listen to this without a smile, nor indeed without laughter, for his whole manner was provocative to our risibilities. His expanse of clean-shaven face, his strange expressions of countenance, his spectacles poised on the tip of his nose, and those ardent humorous eyes above them, all this together with his ludicrous corpulency and extraordinary antics, made it impossible to restrain laughter. Yet he himself never smiled. He always, even when people were convulsed, looked as grave as any judge. And this solemnity of expression was an effective background for his humour. When some speakers make a humorous remark in public they themselves

laugh, and in some cases we would not know that they had said anything of the sort did they not laugh. But there was no such stimulus to a defective or jaded sense of humour when Peter Mackenzie spoke.

When he lectured that evening what a crowd there was! Nor did I ever hear him speak with more manifold effect. It was a noble oration: eloquent, dramatic, suggestive in its ideas, rich in practical counsel, and scintillating with humour. Absalom's mule did indeed trot that evening. He was my guest, and when we got home he said to me (as he usually did when I heard him): "Well, how did it go?" I replied honestly that I never heard him have a more glorious time. "Thank you, thank you," he exclaimed; "that's really cheering for a young man like me." And he was a young man, though beyond seventy years. For they who keep their minds open to light and their hearts to love grow younger even as they grow older.

But how did he close that lecture? Sometimes he concluded his lectures with a grand rhetorical peroration, a flight of genuine eloquence. But that night he ended his memorable discourse with a rugged, sinewy, evangelistic appeal. Nor shall I readily forget how he wrought upon the multitude of young men who heard him. There was the hallmark of genius even on that simple exhortation, for genius stamped all his utterances. He took the

cry of the distraught father: "Is the young man Absalom safe?" and how he rang the changes upon that distressful inquiry! The tepid medium of print can never adequately hint the power of his words, "Is the young man Absalom safe? Not if he drinks. Where there's drink there's danger. Is he safe? Not if he is unclean or impure. Is he safe? Not if he bets and gambles. Is he safe? Not if he is dishonest and thrusts his hand into his master's till. Is he safe? Not if he neglects God's house, dishonours the Sabbath, ignores the Bible, associates with the ungodly, denies the Lord who bought him. Is the young man Absalom safe? Yes, if he keeps the Commandments that he may enter into life. Yes, if he has a simple personal trust in the sinner's Saviour. Yes, he is safe if he continually declares 'He loved me and gave Himself for me.' Yes, he is safe if in summer and in winter, in storm and in calm, in life and in death, he follows the Lamb wheresoever He doth go. Then for ever and for evermore the young man Absalom is safe." The immediate effect of those simple words was electrical. The power which accompanied them was amazing. Many a young life must have been evangelized that night.

Is not that an example of evangelistic lecturing? It would ill become any to say that Peter Mackenzie ceased to be an evangelist in presence of such a narration. As a matter of fact there was vastly

more of evangelistic pungency in most of his lectures than in the average sermon of the stated pulpit. Is a man non-evangelistic because he does not follow the beaten tracks of evangelism? God forbid. We must really beware of speaking as if the kingdom of God came by "observation." Missionary and inquiry-room methods, however excellent, are not of the essence of evangelism. They are the ritual of evangelism. Possibly in heaven it may appear that some who here seemed to have most conversions had comparatively few, and *vice versâ*. We "number Israel," but God keeps the book of life. Formal evangelism is ever liable to self-conceit and to the supposition that it has a monopoly of "soul-saving." The Nemesis is that the permanent results are often sadly disappointing. When I remember these things I cannot regret that Mr. Mackenzie forsook formal evangelism for evangelistic lecturing. Distinctly he was an evangelist till his course was run.

But, evangelism apart, all his lectures were full of spiritual helpfulness. He made us laugh till we had no more power to laugh, but did he not do us good? It would be traitorous to our Lord to deny it. He has been deprecated as "only a money-making machine." I might retort that the pity is that churches should be so inordinately organized that they require such expenditure and therefore require money-raising of their ministers. But it is

a gross slander to affirm that this man of God was "a mere money-making machine." In lecturing about my friend all over the land I have often appealed to the hearers, and said: "Did not his lectures afford you spiritual blessing?" And again and again a chorus of "Yes! yes!" has responded to my interrogation. Life was a braver and brighter thing to multitudes when they had heard Mackenzie lecture. If there was frolic, there was also benediction. The diary of our soul was richer when we recorded the impressions produced by those rare orations. When this man lectured he did so as a true minister of Jesus the Saviour.

It has always appeared to me that one of the finest spiritual aspects of his lecturing was its Biblicalness. He almost invariably lectured on a Bible subject, and was not quite so much at home when he dealt with an extra-Biblical theme. He divulged to me once that he had always wished to lecture on Wesley's Journals, but the extensiveness of the topic and the difficulty of compression had prevented him. I believe he had qualities which would have made his treatment of that literary and devotional classic memorably effective. As a rule, however, Bible topics were most congenial to him. To my certain knowledge he wielded a most salutary influence as a popular exponent of Scripture on the lecture-platform. Let it be granted that his puns on Bible-passages violated one's sensibilities,

for he was an incorrigible punster. Moreover, his Biblical anachronisms were numerous and startling. He westernized the Orient to an extraordinary degree. If he deemed that he could make a Scripture narrative real to the life of the masses to-day, he never hesitated to adopt an anachronism. He would represent Abraham as giving a dinner party at seven in the evening, and coming down to receive his guests in evening dress till you almost saw the patriarch's swallow-tails. He would have a cuckoo clock on Jacob's drawing-room mantelpiece. He described the priests of Baal gathered for an open-air service on Carmel, and Elijah teazed and taunted them till they unanimously seized hold of their clerical coat-tails and flapped them in their indignation till they created artificial breezes on the top of Carmel. He characterized Paul and Silas as singing in prison at midnight " Jesu, lover of my soul " and " O for a thousand tongues to sing." But such wild anachronisms are as nothing when we remember that by their means a certain class of people realized the facts of the Bible more clearly. He made God's Book a living book to multitudes. He has probably made more Bible readers among the common people than any preacher of recent years. Let us but have a Bible-reading commonalty and we will defy all the papacies and all the priests that ever threw their baleful shadow upon the land we love.

By lecturing, as he often did, upon the obseurer books and personalities of Scripture he did a popular apologetic work for the Bible, the worth of which it would be difficult adequately to estimate. He made remote and little read books modern and helpful to multitudes. A working man said to me in a town where I had lectured on Mackenzie: "You were right when you said he made folk read their Bibles. He made me do it. I shall never forget when I first heard him. I was then living twelve miles from where he lectured, but I walked in with my mate to hear him. He lectured that night on 'Queen Esther.' I walked home again and was dead tired, but I said to my mate, 'Late as it is, and tired as I am, I'm not going to bed till I've read that Book of Esther through, for I didn't know there was such a book in the Bible.'" Is it not a work worth doing to evoke the interest of such a man in an out-of-the-way book of the Word of God? Peter Mackenzie exercised that sovereign and salutary influence upon hosts of men and women throughout our kingdom. It is a glorious achievement to create popular interest in the Book which is more than a book, a library; and more than a library, a literature; and more than a literature, the Word of the Lord which liveth and abideth for ever.

Mr. Mackenzie was such a Methodist that he even Methodized Scripture scenes. I remember in his

remarkable lecture on Elijah how he described Elijah in the wilderness and rendered it into modern denominational terms. He said: "Poor Elijah! Poor Elijah! Even his cast-iron nervous system could not stand the strain of the reaction of Carmel. He was overwrought and depleted. Jezebel's threat, therefore, told on him more than it would ordinarily have done. She was a terrible woman, and had a devil in her as big as an elephant. So when Elijah heard of her menace he took to his feet and never rested till he reached Beersheba and fell down under the juniper tree, and he said, 'Oh, Lord, my ministry is a failure. I've had no conversions for long. I'll become a supernumerary at Conference, for no new members have been added to my circuit.' But God, who comforteth them that are cast down, said, 'Elijah, my dear man, things are not nearly so bad as you think in that circuit of yours. There have been far more additions to the membership than you imagine. There are seven thousand members on trial that you don't know of.' Then in his inimitable way he apostrophized Elijah and said, 'Elijah, Elijah, you're a grand man and an eloquent and popular preacher, but what's the meaning of this that I hear? Seven thousand members on trial in your circuit of whose existence you did not even know! Oh, Elijah, I'm afraid you're a poor pastor. Surely, you have not been visiting the Church members! I'm afraid, Elijah, you have

not met the classes regularly for tickets or you would have known these seven thousand! It's to be feared, Elijah, that you have been content to write out the tickets and send them to the leaders instead of meeting the classes and distributing them personally.' "

Again I say that, whatever we may think of such anachronisms, Peter Mackenzie evoked a genuine interest in God's Book on the part of thousands whose previous interest in it had been either non-existent, or dead, or dormant. Is not this such an end as preaching aims at? By his peculiar lectures he cheered downcast souls, he strengthened the faith of multitudes, he made Divine things realities to innumerable companies. There is lecturing and lecturing, just as there is preaching and preaching. Certain men who have denounced lecturing have reproduced in their preaching the least desirable elements of lecture-platforms. If a man's heart be full of Christ, why quibble about a designation? Call his words preaching or call them lecturing, they will be words of power and blessing. Mr. Mackenzie reached many by his lectures who would not have been appealed to by ordinary methods, and they will bless God for ever that they heard his eloquent, pictorial, informative, and kindling presentations of religious truth upon the lecture-platform.

The possibilities of popular religious lecturing have perhaps not yet been realized in the churches.

Vast expository and evangelistic issues might be evolved from it. A lecture would reach some when a sermon flies. Popular apologetical lectures are greatly to be desired to-day, and when they are delivered intelligent people, younger and older, respond to them gratefully. The great religious biographies are full of helpfulness when made the subjects of popular lectures in the churches. Only let all ministerial lecturers in this respect follow Mr. Mackenzie's example, and never suppress the evangelist on the platform. When the lectures of ministerial lecturers are "disguised sermons" such lectures will win "not a poor perishable wreath, but a crown that fadeth not away."

## VIII

## GENIUS CONSUMMATE

WHETHER Peter Mackenzie preached or lectured his opalescent genius flashed forth. What memorable things he said! In every sermon and lecture, despite eccentricities of manner and superfluity of humour, some fine sayings would shine. His jokes are recalled but too frequently; his noblest words are consigned to oblivion. He periodically uttered most original and sublime aphorisms. Gems flashed amid incongruous surroundings. You laughed at some queer witticism, and presently you were startled with the delectable surprise of some lovely concept. Let me instance some of his quaint sublimities of which I was myself an ear-witness, or of which I have directly learned from those who heard them.

Preaching on the story of the Woman of Canaan, I heard him say, "When the poor woman first applied to the Master, He said, 'I am very sorry, madam, but you do not reside in My parish. I am sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'

But presently she won him over, and He granted her request. Now how could He do that and preserve His consistency? In one breath He says, 'I'm not sent to such as you,' and then immediately He grants her demand! Well, I think, dear friends, that just for that once the Plenipotentiary of heaven exceeded His commission."

Once I heard him quote the maxim: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." And he said, "Observe that phrase, my friends! We all know what the word 'vanity' means, but what is 'Vanity of vanities?' I think it must signify the fine edge of nothing when it has been whittled to a point."

Never can I forget a saying of his I heard in a marvellous sermon on "Our Saviour Christ, Who hath abolished death"—every way the grandest sermon I heard him preach. He described our Lord's death with quaint pathos, which moved all his hearers, and then he exclaimed, "When the Saviour passed away all the universe went into mourning. The globe dragged lumberingly upon its axis: it was like a great hearse, and it carried *a dead God.*"

Annotating our Lord's expression, "Wolves in sheep's clothing," he said, "But you can generally see the sewing."

Preaching one Sunday morning in his own chapel, and there having been an explosion in works near by during the week, his subject was Paul's thorn in

the flesh, and he remarked that whatever mystery there was about the "thorn" itself, the purpose of God in giving it was clearly revealed: "Lest I should be exalted above measure." Exalted above measure! That's a very dangerous thing. Look at what happened in the explosion last week! How things went up with a bang—exalted above measure!"

Lecturing on Balaam, he said, "When Balaam turned ass, the ass turned prophet." Speaking of the inevitableness of trouble in this life, he said a man remarked to him that he had got to the end of his troubles. "I asked him 'which end?'"

Enforcing the duty of Christian exercise, he said, "Those who walk most are as a rule the healthiest. The road of health is too narrow for wheels."

Urging young men to be always straightforward, he said, "I never knew any one to get lost on a straight road."

On one occasion he remarked, "Ignorance is night. Opinion is twilight. Science is daylight."

"Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" "That," said Mr. Mackenzie, "is like a man cutting his hand wilfully because he had sticking plaster to mend it with." Preaching on Cornelius, he said, "The Lord saw Cornelius praying and giving, and as He had a spare angel knocking about He sent that angel to the good man."

In a wonderful sermon on the Penitent Robber

he described a landed magnate with an immense rent roll, and standing at the foot of the Cross he unfurled it and said to the poor sufferer who had just heard the Saviour's gracious word, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise"—"If thou wilt come down and let me come up and take thy place, I'll give thee all this." But the Robber looked at him and answered, "Nay, lad, *thy lease is too short for me*."

I will now set down continuously a number of his characteristic pulpit and platform sayings, which will, I think, abundantly reinforce our impression of his invincible and rugged genius.

"Investors in faith are sure of a good dividend."

Of the "little maid" taken captive from the land of Israel by the Syrians, he said, "The parents of the child would feel their faith very much shaken by the taking of their child, and that there was an end of it. It was the end of it, but it was the fore end. Little would the parents think that their dear child was to have such an influence for good over her master."

"Good Boaz, when he went among the reapers, said, 'The Lord be with you,' and they straightened their backs and looked into his honest face and said, 'The Lord bless thee.' If we had a little more of that at the present time, we would have fewer strikes and a better mutual understanding. If the masters were to reckon their servants as so many hearts

and heads rather than so many hands, it would not be a bad thing."

"When man first spoke eloquence was born."

"Truth is the cement of society."

"Samson was greatly honoured in having some of his history given previous to his birth."

"The father of John the Baptist, dear good man, when the angels told him about the forerunner of Jesus Christ, said, 'Whereby shall I know this?'—and his five words cost him forty weeks' silence."

"Heaven is a land far off, but believers are booked through to it and will not have to change carriages."

"What is a telescope for but to see things which our own eyes cannot see? That is just what faith is."

"The Proverbs of Solomon is the business-room of the splendid mansion of the Bible."

"The religion of Christ still has the vigour of youth and the stability of old age. Time cannot take a single charm from its beauty nor chisel a furrow on its brow."

"Let the infidels go tooth and nail against the gospel, it will make no difference, for the devil himself never had dynamite strong enough to make a chip in it."

"There is no person in the Bible who occupies so much space as Solomon, and yet of whom so little is said."

"The booking office for true religion is always

open, and is not like the railway-station office, open just ten minutes before the time."

"Wesley's room in Oxford is encased with cedar, and we can smell it on entering."

"The Bible is God's love-letter to the people."

"In Noah's day a satanic millennium had set in."

"When Noah came out of the ark it was a grand sight to see the whole world upon its knees at one time."

"Christians have not a toothless old theology, but a living Saviour."

"Man cannot tame the tongue, but grace can."

"Lying leads to lying. Its fruit is after its kind."

"When a man tells a lie he has to thatch it over to keep the rain out."

"Grumblers are as plentiful as frogs in Egypt in the time of the plague."

Not the least striking feature of this great man's genius was his power of adaptation of other men's ideas. He was an original in this as in everything. He would give the colour of his own personality to the thoughts of great thinkers.

I remember hearing him give this, which, I believe, is a hint of Augustine. It was in a sermon on death. "The Apostle tells us our Lord has abolished death! He did so before He Himself died. Whenever He confronted death He smashed it into atoms. Look at Him in the rocky cemetery of Bethany! He approaches the grave of Lazarus and cries, 'Lazarus,

come forth.' •Why did the Saviour say '*Lazarus*, come forth!' Every one knew who was in that grave. Why need he trouble to repeat the name? Why not say 'Come forth?' Ah, my friends, it was His abolitionary power compelled Him to make that restriction. Had He only said, 'Come forth,' they would have come trooping out from all the graves of the country side."

On another occasion I heard him echo Matthew Henry in a remarkable fashion. He spoke thus: "We often call attention to Joshua because he made the sun to stand still. But lesser men than Joshua have done even more wonderful things. The evangelist tells us of two beggar fellows who were in the city of Jericho when Jesus was passing. Hearing the shuffling feet of the multitude they asked what was the stir, and were told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. 'Then it's now or never,' they said. And they cried unto Him. But the apostles didn't like it, and they said, 'Hold your noise.' They cried yet louder, and the apostles lost their temper, and said, 'Shut your mouth.' The Lord, however, heard them, and we are told that when He heard them He stood still. He stood still! Aye, friends, Joshua wasn't in it with the beggar fellows. Joshua made the sun stand still, but they made the Sun of Righteousness stand still."

Here is a note of John Bunyan's: "I would say to my young friends that if ever you kill a lion,

whatever you do you shall call again about twelve months afterwards, and you will find that the carcase is full of honey."

Illustrations of his incontrovertible genius might be indefinitely adduced. I am reminded of what I heard him say in a sermon delivered shortly after a great pearl robbery. "Why, the poor thief had a wrong estimate of the value of pearls. They are so common in heaven that they build the walls with them."

They who are disposed to brand him as a buffoon are greatly wide of a correct estimate of him. His type is rare and is becoming rarer. Certainly he was one of the most marked geniuses of the Methodist pulpit. He was a greater man than the ministerial class in which he is generally grouped. William Dawson, Sammy Hick, and David Stoner did not say the splendid things that Peter Mackenzie said. Public speakers have imitated his curious manner, and have jumped about on platforms as he did, but they had no power to say what he said. To borrow a figure of Burke's, they had the nodosities of the oak without its strength: they had the contortions of the sybil without its inspiration.

All these "words of delight" were delivered with genuine native oratoric force and effect. Peter Mackenzie was a great orator. Only a joker! Nay verily, for his power of oratory would alone have sufficed to put him into great honour in the ministry.

He was unquestionably a Master of Assemblies. May the tribe increase! For literature nor aught else can displace the power of the silver tongue. Yes. Mackenzie was a great orator; not, of course, a classic orator, as was Canon Liddon; nor a refined rhetorician like Morley Punshon; nor rich in literary allusion like Dean Farrar; nor such an epigrammatic orator as Dr. Parker; but he was a powerful popular orator, his coin was coined in nature's mint, and it never lost its currency among the multitude.

Good is the gift of evangelical orators to the churches. We may hope that the "organizer" will not supplant or supersede such. High in the illustrious bead-roll of inspired and inspiring Gospel orators let the beloved name of Peter Mackenzie be inscribed. When at his best his eloquence was massive and beautiful; often it was fervent with heavenly heat. How he could rouse an assembly by his periods, and climaxes, and perorations! I have heard bursts of eloquence from his lips which were simply magnificent. The eloquence was the more notable because it was extemporaneous in the strict sense. I have had the privilege of looking through his papers since his death, and have been astonished at the meagreness of his notes. Little, if anything, of his eloquent lectures was written prior to their delivery. I asked him once if his lecture on "Job" was in manuscript, and he replied, "Well now, it's strange you should have

asked me that just now, for I've been this very week and bought a manuscript book to try and get it written down when I can get a little quiet." That lecture was one of his ablest deliverances, and abounded in real eloquence. He did not mould his sentences in private, they were inspired in public. This heightens our impression of his oratoric gift. I have listened to eloquence from his lips worthy of the best traditions of sacred oratory. In his best lectures, which were not necessarily his most popular ones, were specimens of ardent eloquence which were ample vindication of his genius.

His power of pathos was very great. Generally pathos and humour co-exist in great personalities and in great literature. They were associated in many of the Scripture saints and heroes, as also in their inspired writings. They are together in Shakespeare. They were blended in the great preachers of the past, and are essentially united in a truly great preacher to-day. The springs of laughter and of tears were contagious in the great heart of Peter Mackenzie. Often did assemblies weep under his rude pathos and sublime. He was deeply appreciative of the pathetic side of life, and had a generous dower of sympathy. I have heard him describe a poor man bereaved of his wife returning with his children to the desolated home after the funeral, and the pathos was so genuine! Nor can I forget the sob which came from many as he represented

the eldest little girl endeavouring to comfort her distressed father, and saying, "Don't cry, father dear, I'll try and take mother's place." Many examples of real unforced pathos might be culled.

Speaking forth such enriching words and with such eloquence and pathos, was not this man indeed a genius? and may we not say of him, as we gratefully review his public career, what we are prepared to avow as we consider his private character:

> He was a man, take him for all in all,
> We shall not look upon his like again.

## IX

## PERENNIAL WIT AND HUMOUR

THE wit and humour of Peter Mackenzie is widely accredited. I think it has bulked too largely in popular estimation, and in critical estimates of this extraordinary man. People have been so absorbed with this element that they have overlooked far nobler qualities. His reputation has been penalized because of his predominating rollicksomeness. It often happens that one prominent gift in speakers and writers is made to overshadow all their other valid gifts. In large degree this has been true in the case of our honoured friend.

Many thought he overdid the humorous. He often thought he did so, and he earnestly attempted to suppress it, not often with conspicuous success. Sometimes he fought a pitched battle with himself, and at least occasionally he conquered.

Be it remembered, however, that his wit and humour were perfectly natural to him. They greatly err who imagine that he assiduously cultivated it. The contrary is the case. It was spontaneous and often uncontrollable. He positively could not help it. In the pulpit and out of it, on the platform and off, he effervesced with it.

He was quite as witty in private as he was in

public. We shall condone many a public extravagance if we remember that. We who knew him privately can testify that he was often as brilliant in this particular in society as in the church. He was every way as great in the home as in the sanctuary. Henry Ward Beecher's friends said he was as resplendent at the fireside as in the auditorium. That is usually true of the highest genius; its table-talk is as affluent as its allocutions.

Mr. Mackenzie assuredly never *tried* to be funny. We know what wit he uttered, but who can estimate what he kept back? He was always consistent with his droll self. His wit was at hand.

We can forgive much of humorous redundancy in public to a man who can say such a thing as this in private. He had been lecturing in a certain northern town, and the mayor of the town had presided. The mayor was very diminutive of stature. Mr. Mackenzie was to be his guest for the night, and as they came out of the chapel together one of the office-bearers jocosely called attention to the contrast in their appearance, the huge minister and the slender mayor. Mr. Mackenzie at once pulled up, and in characteristic manner said, "Yes, sir, I am not surprised that you remark on the contrast between his worship and myself. This is the mayor" (pointing to the chief magistrate), "and here is the corporation" (pointing to his own rotundity).

His humour was often as delicious as it was

sudden in its outflash. At a town he was accustomed to visit annually he was often somewhat fretted by a lugubrious person who was as obese as he was morbid. This party would approach him when the service was over, and though many others were waiting to speak with Mr. Mackenzie, he would seek to engage his attention protractedly. Mr. Mackenzie, most patient and kindly of men, sought often unsuccessfully to hurry this heavy personage away. On one of his later visits this old gentleman approached him as usual, and said, "Well, Brother Mackenzie, the Lord has permitted you to come once more." "Yes, friend, yes," said the cordial Peter. "Ah, you'll be coming to us for the last time one of these days." "Yes, friend, yes." "Ah, Brother Mackenzie, the Word of God says, 'All flesh is grass!'" The opportunity was too good for Peter to resist, and he effectually disposed of the man and his morbidity as he replied, "Aye, my friend, what a haystack you'd make."

This acute and witty observer of men and things was at a social gathering of a village church one day, and was greatly amused at certain rustic men and manners he beheld. His quiet comments to his ministerial friend immensely amused that friend, especially when on seeing a man with an enormous mouth he remarked, "My word! that man might sing a duet by himself."

In his own home his genial humour and sparkling

wit were generously and naturally displayed. When several friends were gathered around his hospitable table allusion was casually made by some one to the abnormal size of a lady's nose, and quizzical remarks were made respecting this facial adornment, when Mr. Mackenzie quietly said: "Well, now, you must remember that her nose was a birthday present to her." Could a kindlier or wittier rebuke have been administered to criticisms of physical personality?

In his private and social life his casual utterances were constantly cast in a humorous form, for he was always *himself*. We were speaking together concerning a very able preacher, who albeit had great defects of voice and manner. He showed alike his judgment and his humour by saying, "Aye, he's a clever man, a learned man. He's forgotten more than most people have ever known. Few men in our ministry have got such a stock in their shop, but I wish it had pleased the Lord to give him a better shop-front." What an effective way of discriminating between a preacher's matter and his manner!

I asked him once how he managed to retain all he read and to utilize it. He answered: "Some men's heads are full up to the top, and so they have no room for anything more, but I have a vacant spot at the top, and so I have always space for a fresh idea."

Always quaint, witty, lovable was this good man in his domestic and social conversations.

Of his public wit and humour much has been spoken and much written. Many of his witticisms are common property to-day, and I shall only cite a few of which I have myself been a witness.

The last lecture I heard him deliver was on the subject of "The nameless prophet of Judah." In his opening remarks he complimented the chairman on his appropriate introductory words, and especially on his reticence concerning the subject of the lecture, and he said, "Sir, you were so considerate that you did not even mention the name of the prophet."

Referring to the communication of Ahijah to Jeroboam, he said, "It was very difficult for Jeroboam to keep a secret because he was a married man."

Alluding to Lazarus being carried by the angels, he said, "They carried him to Abraham's bosom, and he's the only person I ever heard of being there —except Sarah."

In his lecture on "Job" he informed us that he had searched in vain for particulars of Bildad and his surroundings, and he had come to the conclusion that "he was a bachelor and lived in lodgings."

Lecturing on "Gideon," his chairman was an honoured minister of considerable learning, but tedious in manner. Alluding to Gideon's fleece and illustrating it by means of his pocket-handkerchief, he said, "Mr. Chairman, how wonderfully God dealt with that fleece in order to strengthen Gideon's faltering faith! You remember, sir, how at first

it was saturated with wet. Gideon could hardly get it wrung out"—and he wrung his handkerchief in dramatic imitation. "Then how different it was! Whereas it had been so wet whilst all around was as dry as a desert, now all about is like a pool, but the fleece is dry: awfully dry—*nearly as dry as one of your sermons, sir.*"

My father, who was a medical man, presided at one of his lectures, and the vote of thanks to the chairman was proposed by Mr. Mackenzie in his own queer way: "May the dear doctor always prosper. May his plasters always stick. May his pills always operate. And, above all, may his bills always be moderate."

In one of his lectures he succinctly and vividly and accurately described John Wesley's wife as "a wasp."

Speaking of concentration of purpose as a secret of success, he said: "Observe a cat when it is watching for a mouse; it would not look up even though Wombwell's menagerie were going by."

In pointing out how important is the art of putting things, he said, "I heard of a man who once bought a horse by photograph, but it was a great mistake: he put the 'carte' before the horse."

On the subject of marriage he remarked that Eve was the only woman who never threatened to go home to her mother, and Adam was the only man who never tantalized his wife by telling her the way his mother used to cook.

Speaking of a man who prayed very loudly, he said that it seemed as if he were not living very near to God when he had to shout so.

Of a woman's righteous wrath he said, "Her eye kindles with fire, and it is the only flame against which there is no insurance."

Describing Gideon and his young men hewing down the trees of the grove, he said, "If the people had seen how they made the chips fly, they would have thought the timber trade was in a lively state."

"There are people," he said in one of his lectures, "who are like bells—nothing but tongue is in them."

Here are some of his other sayings of a humorous quality:—

"Some people take a hammer to knock a fly off a man's face: the remedy is so rough that it is worse than the disease."

"The Primitive Methodists would have put Manoah's wife on the plan, and the Salvation Army would have made her a captain."

"If you had seen Samson returning from Ashkelon with the suits and sheets of the Philistines he had slain, you would have thought him the sturdiest ready-made clothes hawker you ever saw."

"Jonathan, at the hill of Michmash, knocked down twenty men with a look, and his armour-bearer finished the work with something a little more substantial."

"Jonah's great fish had an opening for anybody who wanted a situation."

"It was a great mistake of Jacob to turn tailor and make a coat of many colours for Joseph."

"Ladies have a well-known love of silence—when fast asleep."

"Some people go to hear a preacher, and the only thing they can remember is that the preacher's arguments were weak, his illustrations faulty, and his metaphors inconsistent. I think it would have been as well if they had managed to forget that part of it too."

"An angry countenance will drive away the backbiting tongue. We should look on the tale-bearer as coldly as the north wind, as angrily as if we had the tic on one side of the face and rheumatism on the other, and they would soon run. They would conclude their little sermon without stopping for any benediction."

The dramatic realism of Peter Mackenzie was astonishing. He was a born actor. He would have made a fortune upon the stage. What surprising effects he produced! He reminded us of George Whitefield's realistic pictorialism and the curious influence it had. I have frequently heard him cry, "There's some one at that door! Some one at that door! Open it, please, and let the gentleman in," and I have seen several people go to the door to open it. I have known him say, "Will some one

open that window, please ? " as he was illustrating some point in a lecture, and immediately a person has got up to open a window in the direction in which he was looking. His pocket-handkerchief was an inseparable part of his personality on the lecture platform. I have seen that handkerchief pass through incredible metamorphoses. Now it has been a whip, and he has represented our Lord chasing the buyers and sellers out of the temple, " and they found He could make a whip as well as He could make anything else, and they were in such a hurry to get out of the way of that whip that they did not stop to pick up their change." Now the handkerchief has been so folded and carried in his arms as to represent the baby Samuel carried carefully in his mother's arms. Again I have seen him use his handkerchief to pourtray the rod of Moses wherewith he clave the rock and the sea. Once I saw him by the same means imitate a fishing net in his lecture on " Scenes in the life of Simon Peter." He said, " We will suppose we are on board one of the fishing smacks of the Capernaum and Gennesaret Fishing Company. They have lent the Lord a boat, and He rewards them with a miraculous draught of fish. Peter was nearly daft with delight, and he exclaimed, 'Aye, John, what a dividend there will be the next time the company meets. Come along ! Let's all lend a hand.'" Then he manipulated his handkerchief over the side of the

platform as if it were a net flung over the side of a ship. "And all went well till the net reached the fish, when it suddenly broke. Peter was like a madman, and cried, 'This is more than flesh and blood can bear. There'll be a less dividend instead of bigger when the company meets.' And Peter went to the side of the ship and, leaning over, he glared fiercely at the fish till some of the little ones took fright at the sight of him, but one of the big ones looked up at him and said, 'Do thyself no harm, Peter, for we are all here.'"

It was often no small ordeal to act as chairman at one of Peter Mackenzie's dramatic lectures, for he was apt to put that functionary into an awkward situation. I was witness of a strange instance of this. It was in the lecture I have just alluded to. He suddenly pulled out his watch and said in tones of surprise and bewilderment, "Sir, it is nine o'clock, and I am in a peculiar difficulty. I promised not later than this hour to visit for a few minutes a poor woman who is dangerously ill. I would like to finish my lecture (loud cheers), but I would not like to disappoint my sick friend." He stood silent, and looked towards the chairman, the audience looking on in silent surprise. The chairman rose and said, "We wish to hear the remainder of Mr. Mackenzie's lecture" (loud cheers), "but we would not desire that the friend who is ill should miss Mr. Mackenzie's visit. Perhaps the minister will

announce a hymn, and we will sing till our lecturer returns." At which Mr. Mackenzie interposed, saying, " I think we need hardly sing, Mr. Chairman, for we may *all* go to see the sick woman—it is Peter's wife's mother." The chairman was drenched in a storm of laughter, which broke from the audience. The witty lecturer added that it was a sure proof of the reality of Peter's religion and his fitness to be an apostle that his mother-in-law resided in the same house with him !

I might record other illustrations of his dramatic humour, but having frequently seen them in print I refrain.

His appearance declared him a humorist. He was unlike any one but himself. Peter Mackenzie and humour were synonymous terms. Despite the solemnity of his countenance people inevitably laughed when he appeared. I have sometimes endeavoured to make him understand how unlike all others he was, but he was incapable of seeing it. He could only be what he was ; he could only do what he did. When he came on to a platform to lecture he made a profound and comical bow. When he entered a pulpit to begin a service he kneeled in preliminary prayer with his arms uplifted and waving in an indescribable fashion. His announcing of a hymn was peculiar in high degree. " Now, then, let us sing, if you please. Let us sing, if you please ! " Then he would read the first verse

of the hymn in rapid tones, with enunciation and elocution which were his alone, and with facial expression and gesture which also were his alone. His public prayers were full of idiosyncrasy. But it was Peter Macknezie talking with God in his own way. He could pray in no other fashion. Smiles and even laughter were often provoked, and *tears* also. On other men's lips certain things he uttered in prayer would be very reprehensible, and in his case they were regrettable, but the man was so full of God that despite these oddities his prayers thrilled with spiritual influence, and bowed the souls of the congregation before the Lord. If his prayers were unconventional, they were entirely consistent with the personality of the man!

How catholic those supplications were! His great heart gave hospitality to all men. His sympathies went out to people of every sort. He pleaded for such as are usually ignored in congregational devotions; and if he did it queerly, we will think less of their unconventionality, and more of the wealth of tenderness and the strength of faith that made memorable those pulpit intercessions.

His public reading of the Bible often manifested his wayward and characteristic humour. The passing comments he made were racy and not unfrequently full of wit. His dramatic and elocutionary effects, too, were sometimes very disconcerting to a congregation. I once heard him read as the Scrip-

ture lesson the third chapter of the Book of Daniel, wherein a list of musical instruments recurs several times. When he read the first list he acted the scene in a way it is impossible either to reproduce or to forget. He imitated the playing of several of the instruments: for example, he represented a man with a "cornet," another with a "flute," a third with a "harp," and he did it graphically; then when he came to the words "fall down and worship," he made a profound obeisance. Seeing this one said to oneself "I hope he will not repeat these antics when he comes to the second list of instruments, but a verse or so later!" He did not dramatize the scene again, but he threw the congregation quite off the proprieties when he read, "That at what time ye hear the sound of——" and quietly remarked, "We will take the band the same as before, my friends."

We do not commend all this impetuous man said and did. But his wit and humour were a good gift of God to him, and he used them to the best of his light for God's glory and man's instruction in righteousness. Consecrated humour has played a grand part in the evangelization of the world. God's prophets have often wielde l that weapon, and among those who wrought exploits therewith must stand conspicuous the loved name of Peter Mackenzie.

# X

## TOILING TOWARD THE GREATNESS OF HIS REST

ALREADY I have, in appreciating the character and genius of this evangelical Colossus, virtually described his remarkable work. In his own denomination and far beyond it that work is now historic.

Few ministers of Christ have laboured so assiduously. No marvel that upon his monument in Dewsbury Cemetery is inscribed the apothegm, "He who never rested rests." He assuredly never rested. Holidays he knew not. Every Sunday he preached, all the year round, without thought of one leisured Lord's Day. Through the summer season he toiled on year by year, aiding especially seaside churches and rural churches. For many years he took no single Sunday for rest or recreation. Whilst his critics and deprecators were reposing he was toiling. The year he passed away he told me he was determined to reserve the Christmas Sunday for a Sunday at home, but even for that the churches were pressing him remorselessly. He, however, kept that Sabbath amid the restful raptures of heaven's immortal Christmastide!

I do not think any minister of the Methodist Church has travelled and preached and lectured

so much since John Wesley. Mr. Mackenzie had gigantic strength, and he spent it in a gigantic fashion. The marvel is that he ever attained the age of seventy-one. He was a most self-exacting toiler, he tyrannized over himself—he who was so kindly and remissive to all else.

No man could have offered sacrifice more devotedly at the altar of duty. Service was the enthusiasm of his life. He averaged thirteen public engagements per week, an average only slightly short of that of John Wesley. I saw him just after his seventieth birthday, and he said : "Now I have reached my threescore years and ten I am determined to draw in. I have taken thirteen services per week up to now, but I shall not do it in future." I inquired what limit he intended to draw, and he replied characteristically: "I will not take more than twelve per week henceforth." And that was his average to the end of his devoted days.

Methodists are accustomed to speak of retired or supernumerary ministers as ministers who have "sat down." Mr. Mackenzie, referring to the years in which he had been classed as such a minister, said: "I have never been off my feet since I sat down." It was exactly true. For many years of his later life he had no pastorate, but he spent all his days in the service of the churches in every part of the kingdom.

Nor did he conduct his services, preach, and lecture in a quiet leisurely fashion. Preachers and

speakers are almost all becoming very quiet in these days, and it is not a sign some of us can see with equanimity. True there may be quiet enthusiasm, but evangelical fervour has usually manifested itself in the manner of the gospeller. The great old preachers had such passion that it inflamed their very delivery. Of such an order was Peter Mackenzie. All his services and all his utterances cost him great physical expenditure. He was so vehement that he was invariably bathed in perspiration. He carried quite a miniature linen-press about with him on his journeyings, and after each lecture he had change of raiment. Then he travelled many thousands of miles each year. His endless itineration, his ceaseless and prodigiously energetic services were also associated with a heavy correspondence, constant reading, and the exacting demands of a social kind in the hospitable homes where he stayed. He was assuredly a knight of "industrious soldiership."

He was favoured with a splendid constitution, crowned with a delightfully genial and cheery temperament. Moreover, he had that high revelry in his work which is in itself a grand preservative, and developer of health even amid manifold and depleting labours. In the best sense he took his work easily. By no "mandating" of compositions did he wear down his nervous system. He also was singularly careful concerning his diet, and this

is always more than half the battle to a public speaker. I never knew a portly man with so slight an appetite. He "did eat" his "meat with gladness," but unfailingly with diligent consideration and restraint. He had a loving heart towards all men. He carried no grudges. For those who depreciated him and sneered at him he had nothing but cordial good-will. He remembered none of the painsome "things which are behind." So he slept soundly after his toils, and woke to praise his God with a new song and to love his neighbour as himself.

His unfading freshness even in age was the more to be remarked on, because he almost invariably sat up to early morning hours. His hosts and fellow-guests were wearied before he was. He was throughout his later years a convinced teetotaller, but he indulged in a friendly (and, as Carlyle named it, "a not ineloquent") pipe when his day's work was over. "I have never felt free to condemn a man for *not* smoking," he would remark when anti-tobacconists plied him with more or less gentle raillery.

Thus he laboured, and that more abundantly. On and on he went year in and year out, till his friends sweetly deluded themselves with the hope that, like Tennyson's famed brook, he would go on for ever. He kept his dewy freshness to the end of his toil-filled days. The last time I met him he said: "I must get another photograph taken before

I begin to go off." But the going-off process never set in. There was no slow decline. This evergreen bloomed on. Not lingering, but suddenly he lost himself in light.

Mr. Mackenzie's tremendous life-work was not accomplished without self-sacrifice. Nor was that self-sacrifice expressed in one way only; it had varied manifestations.

He had a very happy home. Mrs. Mackenzie was a good, kind, motherly woman; stringently a keeper at home, but, like her husband—as I can testify from repeated experiences—always given to warm-hearted and generous hospitality. She was a quiet, homely woman, endowed with saving common sense. She was moreover a simple-minded, sincere and humble Christian. Incapable of public expressions of religion, she attended well to the ways of her household; her husband praised her, and her children have risen up to call her blessed. Mrs. Mackenzie delighted with modest delight in her much-loved husband's fame. How she joyed in "our Peter's" conversions, crowds, collections, and multifarious achievements. She lived a life —an honourable, secluded life—of considerable self-sacrifice in that she so freely surrendered her honoured husband for the sake of the churches. He and she and their family had talked long and much of the golden wedding celebrations which they hoped to observe. He was devising very

liberal things for the poor in connexion with that happy commemoration. "Don't we look a handsome couple?" he said in his droll way to his daughter as Mrs. Mackenzie and he went out to a friend's house together not long before God took him. The golden wedding he still would talk of; but it was one of the "withheld completions of life." He passed away ere the commemorative day arrived, and as he lay in his brief final sickness, he said with solemn gladness: "Mother, we will keep the golden wedding on the other side." And I doubt not they have kept it there, for she shortly joined him in "the land of lovely lost things."

Mr. Mackenzie's self-sacrifice evinced itself, as thousands know, in the smallness of the financial recoupment he usually was content to receive for his services, despite the fact that he raised greater sums of money than any other Methodist preacher; in this indeed Morley Punshon was his only rival. He might have secured wealth, but that prospect never charmed him. He systematically went where his gains were very inconsiderable, and frequently he profited not a penny. Seldom has a Christian minister loved the Church with so selfless a love.

We see his sacrificial spirit also in the circumstance that he was such a friend of village churches and poor churches generally. No gold-grubber was Peter Mackenzie! No popularity-hunter he!

He might have blazed every night of the week in the chief buildings of the principal cities and towns of the kingdom, as in America and the Colonies, for he could crowd halls and churches where other men failed to do so, but he deliberately and constantly went to small and poor places that his service might be given where it was needed most. He told me a few months before his death that he had received an invitation to lecture in Spurgeon's Tabernacle. I said, "I hope you will be able to go." He replied, "I would like to have done so, but I have an engagement that day in a little colliery place in South Wales; and if I gave them up, I have no other day to offer them for long, so I must not disappoint the dear people." And Spurgeon's Tabernacle had to stand aside in the interest of a poor village church. Mackenzie did not seek to shine: he sought to bless. Such a lovely spirit graced this strong toiler!

He was delightfully loyal to his own Church, whilst a loving friend of all who name "the honourable Name." It has been computed that he raised £120,000 for Methodism. His private gifts to churches were on a singularly generous and sustained scale. I know one church to which he lent several hundred pounds, and every year he preached and lectured for that church in order to help its funds and to raise the interest on his own money, out of which interest he would give a generous sub-

scription. His converts are all over the world. Some of the most influential lay officials of Methodism in recent years have been led to religious decision by his teachings. How many of our struggling churches miss him to this day. His kindness to them was "*loving* kindness." He denied himself that he might smooth their rugged path. In the interest of his life-work Mr. Mackenzie gave himself devotedly to mental cultivation. Many are surprised when informed that he was a diligent, in fact, insatiable, reader. Yet such in truth he was. He had a very large and well-equipped library. He carried a bag of books with him on his journeys, which he used to call "my travelling library." He read widely in expository, homiletical, and theological literature, and the substantial results of his reading appeared in his sermons and in his lectures, which were often surprisingly rich in information on Bible people and places. His friends were frequently amazed at his acquaintance with the literature of the subjects on which he lectured, at his knowledge of commentaries and expositions, and also at his familiarity with the bearings of critical questions. The intellectual furniture and garniture of this pulpit and platform Boanerges would have put to shame some who referred to him as a mountebank. He had a genuine delight in a suggestive and informative book. How he plied bookmen with inquiries concerning the most

recent best books! How he consulted scholars as to the standard works! Nothing pleased him more than to be put on the track of a good book.

It is in such tastes and habits that we see the explanation of Mr. Mackenzie's sustained mental freshness. Count it no slight thing that he so long *held his own* as a preacher and lecturer. For nearly forty years he was in the front rank, and at the end was fully as influential as ever he had been. Jocoseness cannot keep a man going so long. Claptrap and mere smartness cannot. Even personal goodness cannot. Mr. Mackenzie was always producing new material. He was not of those who make two or three old favourites do duty through lengthening years. He was a traveller, but his sermons and lectures were only such in a very limited degree. Visiting places every year for many years he never palled; indeed thoughtful people heard him with increasing interest, having overcome their distaste for his mannerisms by observing the real quality of his matter. His vivacious example is a rebuke to all publicists who live upon their mental past. He gave his mind its rights, for with all his mind he loved His redeeming God.

And this great work never spoiled the worker. He kept his own vineyard. Utterly unspoiled was he. Natural, affable, humble, approachable, lovable was dear "Peter" always and everywhere,

"Thank God who has given us favour with the people," he would say with simple sincerity. He walked in the light all the days of his earthly pilgrimage, and now dwells in the eternal light.

As I stood among the mourning thousands in Dewsbury when the body of Peter Mackenzie was borne to its resting-place, till the Lord shall come, I saw a display of love and sorrow all too seldom seen. His friends had gathered from near and far. Men who owed their souls to him where there; brother ministers whom he had loved and served so well. All sorts and conditions mourned his passing. Not least numerously represented were the poor, to whom he had been a father. "The best epitaph is the tears of the poor"—and that pathetic epitaph immediately was his. It was said that Dewsbury had not witnessed such a funeral within the memory of the inhabitants.

As his body was laid in the earth amid multitudinous tears, all were distressed at his loss, and we felt that nothing remained in that sad hour of bereftness but to emulate the disciples of the Baptist who turned from the dead leader to the living God and "went and told Jesus."

But we realized also on that dull November day of 1895 that God had set his bow in the cloud and it irradiated the gloom. There was much to evoke songs of praise. It was meet and right to sing, as we did, his favourite hymn—

My heart and voice I raise
To sing Messiah's praise;

for Peter Mackenzie had lived melodious days. His life had been rounded by the great Artificer into beautiful completion. He had accomplished "the days of our years." God had fulfilled to him the promise made to His "friend" of yore—"I will bless thee, and make thee a blessing." The whole scenery of his life's close was sweetly appropriate: all but idyllic. We desire a kindly environment to death. We contemplate with pensive pleasure Spurgeon lying amid the umbrageous palms in the Tabernacle where his voice had held spell-bound the listening multitudes. We view with thrills of solemn gladness Tennyson passing away whilst his Shakespeare lay open on his bed, and the mellow moonlight flooded the privileged chamber.

And circumstances as harmonious attended the departure of our consecrated and much-loved friend; leaving such favour with man that his engagement book was crowded and he had engagements registered which it would have taken him three long years to fulfil. Preserved in fulness of strength despite his seventy years, so that within a year of his decease he told me he scarce knew what it was to feel tired. Lying like Halyburton, "pained yet not pained," for but some ten days, and those days angel-guarded and Christ-sustained; for the most part conscious and collected; and

when he wandered it was into the old loved regions where are the green pastures and the waters of rest. Now he prayed for his family, and now for his country, now for his church, and now for his ministerial brethren. Hoping at first that he might preach again on the earth; then assured it could not be; and, best of all, serenely content it should not be, all his prayers aggregated now into one sublime petition, "Thy will be done."

But a little before the chariots of God came for him he exclaimed—alluding to one of his favourite themes of discourse—"The angels are coming! The angels are coming! And they will take poor old Peter out of prison!" It was even so. The radiant convoys flashed down. Their glory irradiated the prison-house he was quitting. Silently, yet triumphantly, they bore the ransomed soul aloft—higher, higher, even higher—till they reached "God in the highest." They laid the faithful servant at the Master's feet.

And he sings through endless years the song that no man can learn but the hundred and forty and four thousand that have been redeemed from the earth.

Truly the angels took him out of prison. His God has "set" him "in a large place," even in the fatherland, where "no clouds of nature stain the starry clearness of the free."

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